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NEW TALES.

BY

MRS. OPIE.

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IN FOUR VOLUMES.

Men pleas'd theirselves, think others will delight
In such like circumstance, with such like sport.
Their copious stories oftentimes begun
End without audience, and are never done.

SHAKSPEARE.

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NEW TALES.

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WHITE LIES.

CLARA DELANCY and Eleanor Musgrave were passing the morning together alone at the house of their guardian, with whom they resided, and were reading the last volume of an interesting book, when they were interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Somerville, a lady who came to pay them a morning visit.

"What an unfortunate interruption," said Clara, when the servant announced their visitor.

"Unfortunate indeed," replied Eleanor, "I hope she will not stay long; and I heartily wish she was at Nova Scotia!"

Mrs. Somerville now entered the room, and Eleanor hastened to her with an extended hand, and assured her she was delighted to see her: but Clara simply asked how she did, and set her a chair.

"I am afraid I interrupt you," said Mrs. Somerville.

"O dear! not at all," replied Eleanor; "and if you did, we should be happy to be so interrupted."

But Clara said nothing. And the conversation fell into its usual routine of weather, gossip, dress, and the common *et-cætera* of topics, when the object of the conversers is not to improve, but to kill time; for, though both Clara and Eleanor had cultivated understandings, and could talk better than most women, Mrs. Somerville was not a woman capable of calling forth their powers of mind in any way.

At last, having exhausted these usual subjects, and being come to a pause,

"prophetic," as the cousins hoped, of an "end" to the visit, Mrs. Somerville said, "So, young ladies, I find Mrs. Harrison has been giving a ball?"

"A little dance rather," observed Clara.

"A dance! No, indeed," cried Eleanor, frowning aside at Clara; "it was a ball, and a very charming one it was."

"You were there then?"

"Yes, we were both there;—why were not you of the party?"

"O dear!" replied Mrs. Somerville with a sneer, and drawing up her head; "it was very unlikely Mr. and Mrs. Harrison should invite us to any of their splendid doings;—besides, if they had, we should not have gone, for we can't afford to give balls in return."

"Indeed," said Clara, "this party was neither a ball nor any thing splendid."

"What can you mean, Clara, by saying so?" interrupted Eleanor; "were

there not several couples dancing—the very best company the place affords;—excellent music, and an elegant supper?"

"Good company, as far as it went: but I must say that it was merely a little party, got together in a hurry to celebrate the birth-day of their eldest daughter and the return of young Harrison (the Guinea pig as they call him) from his first East India voyage; and the couples chiefly consisted of their children and their children's play-fellows. As to the supper....."

"It was elegant and excellent," cried Eleanor interrupting her, "as well as the whole entertainment, call it by what name you please:—cold moor game, boar's head, goose pie, pine-apples, grapes, West India sweet-meats, Champagne;—in short...."

Here Mrs. Somerville rose in violent emotion, and declared that "she wondered at the impudence of a man who was a bankrupt not six months ago, and

whose certificate was not yet signed, in giving such an expensive entertainment and supper."

"Indeed, madam," said Clara, "the supper I am convinced cost them nothing; and...."

"Yes, Miss Delancy, yes, I see your good-natured motive; you wish to excuse them to me, and I know why: but Miss Musgrave has told me the truth, and.... But good morning, young ladies; when my husband fails, and *seemingly* can't pay ten shillings in the pound, then *we* will give fine balls and magnificent suppers—Good morning, good morning," and out of the room she hastened.

"A hateful, spiteful, envious creature," exclaimed Eleanor; "I said what I did, on purpose to tease her: for I knew she was always jealous of the poor Harrisons, particularly of that charming Mrs. Harrison; and even their misfortunes could not soften her heart towards them."

"But why did you exaggerate so grossly? why did you injure them, in order to tease her? You know that much of what you said was absolutely false, and all gross exaggeration."

"Nay, can you deny that there were on the table all the things which I named?"

"There were the remains of a goose pie sent from the North; the remains of a boar's head, also a present; one pine-apple, and some grapes, from their friend Sir Charles Mowbray's hot-house; and a pot of ginger, which their son brought: but the music, which you so much extolled, was the pianoforte played by Mrs. Harrison, and the tambourine by one of her daughters; and the Champagne was only green gooseberry wine made at home. Yet this simple and cheap pleasure you magnified into a splendid and expensive entertainment, wholly unfitting their circumstances."

"O, never mind, as I mortified that

woman; all I wish is that I had been a little more poetical in my piece."

"That is always unnecessary, for your descriptions are commonly too poetical."

"Why, what harm is there in a little exaggeration, or even in a little white lying?"

"Every harm; as '*rien n'est beau que le vrai—le vrai seul est aimable.*' Besides, when once a lie is told, who knows what the consequences may be? and the line might also be read, 'Nothing is safe but the truth—truth only is security.'"

"I am sure it is often very unsafe to tell the truth, and very rude too. Suppose I had told that spitfire woman she did interrupt us, and we wished she had not come?"

"That was not necessary. But it was equally unnecessary for you to tell her you were delighted to see her, and

that she was an agreeable interruption."

"But what harm was there in it? and, except her mortification, which is an agreeable result to me—what harm can arise from my pompous description of the Harrisons' hop, alias ball?"

"I can't tell; but I believe that Mr. Somerville is Mr. Harrison's principal creditor."

"I had forgotten that," replied Eleanor starting; "and I am sorry then I said what I did. Yes, it may do mischief."

"I wish then you would call on Mrs. Somerville, and own that your description far exceeded the truth."

"Indeed I shall own no such thing: besides, if I did, she would not believe me; you see she would not listen to or believe you.—But come, Clara, have done preaching, and let us resume our book."

Their book was resumed, and Mrs.

Somerville was soon forgotten in the interest of the story. But Mrs. Somerville did not forget.

These young ladies were left to the care of Mr. Morley, by an old lady who bequeathed to them considerable fortunes; but left nothing to their brothers and sisters, who were by other mothers, and considerably older than they were.

The old lady also desired that their guardian's house should be their place of residence, when they were not at school, till they were five-and-twenty; when, and when only, they were to take possession of their fortune. But it was Clara's happy lot not to be forced to go to school at all; for a wise, a virtuous, a pious, and an accomplished mother, still lived to watch over her education herself, and resided with her under the roof of Mr. Morley, till a fever carried her off in the prime of life.

This gentleman was now daily expect-

ing his nephew Sidney Davenant from the East Indies, where he had made a considerable property, and whence he was summoned home to take possession of still greater possessions, left him by Mr. Morley's eldest brother.

As Sidney Davenant had been brought up by his uncle, and had lived with him till he went to the East Indies, he was no stranger to his two wards; and he had left so strong and pleasing an impression on the memory of Clara Delaney, (who was two years older than Eleanor,) that she felt a degree of flutter, and emotion at the idea of his return, which her excellent understanding vainly endeavoured to overcome.

Her guardian, perhaps, was one cause of this emotion, because he was fond of joking about husbands and setting caps, and indulging in that common but vulgar style of talking, which is often mischievous to weak girls, and fills their

heads with lovers and coquetry, and is always offensive to the sensible and the refined.

"Well, girls! let us drink the handsome nabob!" was his usual address after dinner; "and a good husband to one of you!"

As he said this he used to wink his eye and look cunning. But Clara observed that his eye always rested on Eleanor; and she thence inferred that he concluded Davenant's choice, if he were allowed to make one, would fall on her.

"And no wonder," thought the humble Clara; "she is so very beautiful, and her manner is so lively and so winning! I can't flatter people as she does, and where I feel the most I express the least!" Clara might have added, "And her fortune is much larger than mine." But though her guardian did not leave out this recommendation, while thinking over his ward's attractions, Clara was too young and too

little apt to value riches, to fear Eleanor's superiority in that article.

"Pray, Clara," said Eleanor to her one day, "how is your heart affected towards this expected nabob?"

"My heart, Eleanor—really I—I don't exactly know. By his letters, and all we hear of him, he must be a most excellent man; and I recollect he was very fond of me, and very kind to me, when I was a child."

"And so he was to me, I dare say: but I have no recollection of him whatever; and should have forgotten there was such a person, if my guardian had not reminded me of him."

"*I* should never have forgotten him, if I had never heard his name again; and I remember that I cried bitterly when he went away."

"But you were older than I was."

"Yes, two years."

"Only two years! I thought it had

been more. But, my dear, you have not yet spoken to the point :—I did not ask you what you thought of this good gentleman's letter-writing and virtues; but I want to know whether you mean to 'set yonr cap at him,' as our guardian says: because I give you fair notice *that I do.*"

"If so, I am sure you will succeed," replied Clara in a faint voice; "and I am too humble to enter the lists with you. But what will Captain Lethbridge say?"

"Thank you, sweet humility!" said Eleanor; "and Captain Lethbridge may say what he pleases. But remember, that if it costs your faithful heart a pang to give up your chance with this Indian Adonis, I can be generous and withdraw my pretensions."

As she said this she looked at herself in the glass: and she thought, and Clara too as she gazed on her, that she had

pretensions which, though withdrawn, could not but be felt and acknowledged.

And what had Clara to oppose to them?—A countenance beautiful from expression—an expression of intellect, sweetness, and of a heart devoid of guile. Truth shone on her open brow, regulated her actions, and guided her words; while an ever-varying colour enlivened the transparent whiteness of her fine and even skin; and a smile which betokened confidence and benevolence was calculated to call them forth in those who associated with her. This sunshine of the face made her presence diffuse cheerfulness wherever she appeared; and while Eleanor instantly excited unqualified admiration, Clara was as certain to excite involuntary attachment.

In personal graces they were very nearly equals: both were tall and finely formed, and both excelled in those accomplishments deemed essential to the education

of young women. But Clara was the finer performer on different instruments, and the more finished singer. In things of more consequence Clara had had a considerable advantage over Eleanor. Eleanor lost her parents in childhood, and was indebted for the formation of her mind and morals wholly to a boarding-school: but Clara, as I before stated, had the benefit of a mother's watchful tenderness till she was ten years old; and that admirable parent was careful to instil into her docile and easily awakened mind, the soundest principles both of religion and morality. The sower of that good seed died, alas! before the latest seed-time came. But it did come, and ripened into a plentiful harvest: and though the monitory voice was hushed, and the watchful eye closed, Clara continued to act as if the one could still admonish, and the other could still observe.

Clara was right in saying that her man-

ners were not so popular as those of Eleanor. Eleanor, whose principles were as lax as those of persons in general; and who, whenever she wished to please, was not withheld from doing it by any regard for truth and sincerity, was always of the opinion of those with whom she conversed, especially if her companions were of that rank of life which I venture to denominate "persons of worship." She was, however, guarded by a fine understanding from making this unprincipled pliability of opinion too apparent and easy to be detected: and even when Clara was most shocked at her utter dereliction from truth, she could not but wonder at and admire the consummate skill with which she avoided all appearance of insincerity. "What charms have I," thought Clara, "to oppose to so much beauty and so much art?" whenever the wish to rival Eleanor in Davenant's admiration only too frequently got possession of her.

Clara, unfortunately, remembered that Davenant had always called her *his little wife*; and once too she had overheard her mother say to Mr. Morley, "Davenant calls Clara his little wife:—Oh! could I live to see that union indeed take place, provided the man realizes the promise of the boy, I should have lived long enough." From that moment—so careful ought parents to be of what they say before children—Clara's little heart fondly cherished the image of her affectionate playfellow; especially as Davenant continued to call her his little wife even when she was grown into a tall girl, and as he wrote her a most affectionate letter on the death of her mother, whom he idolized. Nor, spite of her judgement, could Clara help dwelling on these recollections.

"Upon my word, Clara," said Eleanor to her one day, "you blush so prettily whenever this Indian Adonis is talked of, that I suspect you are prepared to fall in

love with him. Tell me, do you not suspect the same thing?"

The conscious Clara was hesitating how to answer her, when a servant came in with a note to Eleanor from Lady Sophia Mildred, the wife of a Sir Richard Mildred who lived in the neighbourhood, a lady with whom she was a very great favourite.—The note was to invite Eleanor to dine with her, *en famille;* and to say she would call for her at a certain hour.

"Tell the servant to tell his lady I will be ready at the time she mentions," said Eleanor. Then, forgetting her question to Clara remained unanswered, she, to Clara's great relief, left the room to prepare for Lady Sophia.

This lady's booby son, the heir of Sir Richard Mildred, an ancient and wealthy baronet, was under the care of a very respectable man, who took eight young gentlemen to educate; and who did his duty too strictly by them to be a favourite with

a weak unprincipled mother like Lady Sophia Mildred.

Accordingly she used every method to disgust Sir Richard with Mr. Bellamy's mode of tuition: she accused him of severity in his treatment of her son, and declared that she should never be easy while her darling Augustus was under the dominion of such a tyrant. But she talked in vain: Sir Richard found that the boy, spite of his idleness, advanced in his learning, and he knew Lady Sophia's weakness too well to be influenced by her representations.

In the sympathizing bosom of Eleanor this lady was in the habit of depositing her conjugal griefs; for Sir Richard's obstinacy and ill-humour were never-failing topics with her; and her poor boy's sufferings at school were always the climax of the distress: and this invitation to dinner just received, was, Eleanor knew, the consequence of her having some new grievance to impart to her.

Lady Sophia arrived at the appointed time, and in their way home the fond mother could not forbear calling to see her petted child. But she arrived at an unlucky moment; for through the open window she saw Mr. Bellamy in the act of dragging her son by his arm into the middle of the room, while the face of her beautiful Augustus was red and swelled, and his hair in great disorder.

"A wretch! a ruffian!" screamed out Lady Sophia, "he will kill the child, I know he will!" And into the school-room rushed Lady Sophia followed by Eleanor, who saw what her ladyship saw, but did not draw the same conclusions.

At sight of his mother, the angry boy burst from his preceptor's hand and flew to her, sobbing and speechless with resentment and the desire of vengeance; while his mother clasped him to her bosom, and called him her "dear injured child!"

Eleanor, meanwhile, was looking at

another boy, adown whose cheek the blood was streaming from a wound in the ear, and who had likewise been dragged like a culprit into the middle of the room; while Mr. Bellamy—who till now stood in calm and dignified silence waiting to be interrogated by Lady Sophia—replied to Eleanor's question of "How did this young gentleman hurt his ear?" by "Master Mildred bit it, Miss Musgrave."

On hearing this, the amiable Augustus kicked and stamped and roared aloud; and Lady Sophia, being afraid her darling should go into fits, took him into another room where there should be nothing to wound his sight or his hearing, and requested Eleanor to follow.

When there, she desired her darling to tell her what had occasioned the violence which his master was using to him when she drove up to the door. And at last she gathered from him, that he and

Master Felton had been quarrelling; and that as usual, old Bellamy had blamed him, and was going to punish him when she appeared.

"But he *had* punished you, the brute!" said the enraged Lady Sophia; "for I declare your cheek is swelled with a blow from his clumsy hand. And here are all the marks of his odious fingers."

"And see," said the boy, "where my hair is pulled off my head!"

Lady Sophia did look, and saw that his hair had indeed been pulled off; and declared she would take him home with her, and he should never return to the brute again; for now Sir Richard would be convinced with his own eyes how old Bellamy treated her darling. "And you, Miss Musgrave," she added, "are my witness of this violence."

"I did not see Mr. Bellamy strike Master Mildred, madam."

"No, but you see very recent proofs

of his having struck him; and you saw him drag him into the middle of the room."

"Yes, but not by the hair of his head."

"O yes you did, I am sure I saw him; and only see how much hair is pulled off."

"But not surely by Mr. Bellamy. Master Mildred does not say he did it."

"If he did not, who should, Miss Musgrave? and such a wretch shall no longer torture my darling—shall he, Augustus?"

"Not IF he did this, madam."

"*If* he did this! Did he not do it, Augustus? Miss Musgrave, you see, does not believe it."

"Why, yes," said the boy sullenly, who found his removal from school depended on the establishment of this fact; "and she is naughty to say he did not." So saying, he struck out his elbow at Eleanor, who was silenced but not convinced. And Lady Sophia told her, "that the

greatest proof of friendship which she could give her, would be to bear her testimony to the truth of old Bellamy's treatment of her son, of which she must know she was an eye-witness: for," added Lady Sophia, "Sir Richard would not believe me, and would say it was only my misrepresentation in order to get my angel boy home again. So, my dear friend, all my hopes of peace of mind depend on you, for Sir Richard always doubts the truth of what I say."

"What a disgraceful confession," thought Eleanor, "for a wife to make!" And she began to believe that Clara was right in the great value which she set on habitual truth-telling, even in trifles.

The amiable Augustus being now pacified, Lady Sophia, leading him by the hand, sailed into the room with all the dignity of conscious rank, and told Mr. Bellamy that she should take her son home with her that moment, and that she

should do her utmost to prevent Sir Richard's ever sending him back to a place where he was so ill treated."

"If you succeed, madam," replied Mr. Bellamy with a manner as proud and cold as her own, "you will do me a great favour, for you will rid me of the most troublesome pupil I ever had, and I heartily wish your ladyship success." He then went to call up her carriage.

"Fine airs old Bellamy gives himself!" cried Lady Sophia; "but I don't believe him;—do you?"

Eleanor did not answer, for she did believe him: but she could scarcely attend to what she said; for she was amusing herself with watching the looks mutually exchanged between the boy with the bitten ear and the amiable Augustus. and they reminded her, in sweetness of expression, of that of two cats threatening each other on a house-top; and Eleanor could not help suspecting that the bitten ear was

either the consequence or the cause of the loss of hair on Master Mildred's head, and the blow on his face. But Lady Sophia and Augustus were resolved "Old Bellamy" (as they called in scorn a fine man of six-and-thirty) should be the nominal delinquent; and Eleanor did not see how she could avoid saying the same. The carriage came round; the young adversaries looked and grinned their last defiance; and Lady Sophia, her precious child, and Eleanor, drove off.

Sir Richard Mildred was a man of whom all his family stood in awe, and especially his lady-wife; though she, in her turn, made others afraid of her. And as fear is the most common cause of lying, vanity excepted—that little lying known by the name of white lying—Lady Sophia, to screen herself from Sir Richard's awful frowns and biting sarcasms, had had so often recourse to the shield of a lie or a subterfuge, that she was right in saying

he never believed what she said: and now that he saw her return bringing Augustus with her, though it was a holiday, he was prepared to disbelieve whatever excuse she might make for this, as he thought it, improper indulgence.

Lady Sophia as soon as she saw him beheld the gathering storm on his brow; and trembling habitually at the sight, (however bold she was in her conviction of being right for once,) she was so hurried and so obscure in her mode of narrating the injuries of her darling boy, that Sir Richard declared his inability to understand her: then, assuring him Miss Musgrave had seen all she saw, and would vouch for the truth of all she said, she began her story over again; and ended it by showing the impoverished hair and the marked cheek in evidence of old Bellamy's cruelty.

"Old Bellamy, madam! Call a man of his years *old*?"

"It is wrong, I know; but Augustus calls him so."

"Then Augustus ought to be flogged out of such impertinence. But let me understand you; Do you mean to tell me such marks of brutal violence were inflicted by Mr. Bellamy on my son Augustus Mildred?"

"I do; and Miss Musgrave will tell you the same,—will you not? Did you not see old Mr. Bellamy drag Augustus by the hair of the head into the middle of the room?"

"Certainly, madam, I saw him drag him into the middle of the room."

"And by the hair of the head?"

Lady Sophia cast a piteous imploring look at Eleanor; and she answered "Yes, I did.—And" said she evasively, "the marks of the blow on the cheek, though now nearly effaced, were quite visible."

"I am shocked and amazed, Lady Sophia; and but for this young lady's testi-

mony I could not have believed this story: but as she says it is so, I shall write to Mr. Bellamy, and tell him that cruelty being not only my aversion, but, in my opinion, a very bad mode of teaching, I shall not allow Augustus to return to his house, but shall send him to a more mild preceptor."

Sir Richard then left the room to write his intentions to Mr. Bellamy. And Lady Sophia thanked her friend again and again for the great service which she had rendered her and her son, and declared that she would never forget it.

But all Lady Sophia's thanks and caresses were impotent to reconcile Eleanor at once to herself. She knew she had violated the truth, and that in so doing she had been the means of injuring a man whom she esteemed, in order to gratify a woman whom she despised; nor could she help feeling that this was the situation which Clara had often anticipated.

"Who," said Clara, "can be sure, if that restrictive principle is once broken down, which forbids all violations of truth, as odious to the God of truth, and as contemptible as well as mischievous in the eyes of man,—who can say that if they once admit their right to judge when truth is to be told and when it is not, that they shall not be led from the commission of what they choose to call innocent lies, into that of malignant and injurious ones, by the influence of strong temptation?"

For Eleanor that fatal time was now arrived; and she had told an injurious lie: for though the loss of the pupil was in one sense a benefit rather than an injury to Mr. Bellamy, still she had injured him in Sir Richard's esteem, and made him appear guilty of a fault of which he was incapable. However, it was too late to repent or retrace her steps; and all she had now to hope was, that no more

inquiries would take place; and she anxiously awaited Mr. Bellamy's reply to Sir Richard's note. It came in the evening, and simply stated that Mr. Bellamy was sorry Sir Richard disapproved of his manner of treating Master Mildred; but that, as his conscience did not reproach him with undue severity, he should soon reconcile himself to the loss of a very troublesome pupil.

Mr. Bellamy was a proud man; he was a man of a good family, and once a man of fortune: but circumstances had deprived him of the latter, and his pride had not fallen with his fortunes.

Sir Richard had always treated him with that respect with which a real gentleman treats another, however reduced in situation; but his feelings had been frequently wounded by the ignorant pride of Lady Sophia: and the note which he wrote to Sir Richard, though written to him, was meant at her.

Eleanor enjoyed the reply; not only because she entered into Mr. Bellamy's wrongs, and was grieved to have assisted in inflicting them; but because it utterly precluded all inquiry into the merits of the case, and secured her therefore from detection; for, in spite of her compunctious feelings, she too much resembled Fag the footman, in the play of The Rivals, who says to his master, "For though, sir, I do not scruple telling a lie to serve a friend, it *hurts one's conscience terribly* to be *found out.*" And Fag, I believe, speaks the opinion of most persons, as a strict regard to truth is the rarest of all virtues.

In the evening Mr. Morley sent his coach for Eleanor; and as she drove past the house of Mr. Bellamy, and received a kind bow from him from the window, her heart smote her very painfully. "How ashamed I shall be to see him again, poor man!" involuntarily burst from

her lips. "But I will take care not to see him again of many months" she said to herself as the coach stopped at her guardian's door:—and she knew that this purpose might easily be effected.

Eleanor was usually so communicative on her return from a visit at Sir Richard's, and used to give so ludicrous a description of the baronet's frowns and Lady Sophia's fears, that Mr. Morley was quite disappointed at not receiving his accustomed treat: and seeing her unusual gravity and disinclination to talk, he asked her if she was not well; and she assured him she had a bad head-ache.

Accordingly, to keep up this deception, she took up her candle and went to her room, whither Clara kindly followed her: and suspecting that her mind was more diseased than her body, she lingered in her apartment some time, in order to give her an opportunity of unburthening her feelings:—but in vain. Eleanor dared

not reveal to her the cause of her uncomfortableness, and Clara was too delicate to notice it.

The next morning Mrs. Bellamy called; but luckily for Eleanor, not till both Mr. Morley and Clara were gone out. Eleanor therefore had only to desire the servants to utter the usual lie,—that she was not at home,—in order to avoid disagreeable interrogatories and an unwelcome visitor.

Clara was gone on an errand of kindness to a cottage at a distance, and on her return she met Sir Richard and Lady Sophia; the former of whom, who had been to pay a morning visit with his Lady, insisted on her taking his other arm, and assured her that he and Lady Sophia would see her home.

Lady Sophia instantly began on the subject of her grievances, and said, "I conclude Miss Musgrave told you all that happened yesterday?"

"No; she was unusually silent on her return, and told us nothing."

"How strange! then I will." And Lady Sophia entered into a copious detail of what had passed, mixing truth and mere assertion together so artfully, that Clara was [illegible] a loss to discover where the one [illegible] and the other began, though sh[illegible]ry sure there was falsehood [illegible]

"[illegible] can this really be all true?" asked Clara with an incredulous look.

"True! to be sure it is—could I doubt the evidence of my own senses think you?"

"Indeed, madam," replied Clara, "on such an occasion I should almost have doubted the evidence of mine. Mr. Bellamy, that excellent and fine-tempered man, guilty of an act of violence and cruelty like this! I do not know how to believe it."

"Nor did *I*, Miss Delancy," said Sir Richard, "till your cousin Miss Musgrave

declared that she witnessed it; and I considered her testimony as unimpeachable."

"That is more than I do," thought Clara, while consternation and painful suspicion kept her silent.

"But, dear sir," said Clara, recovering herself," surely for one act of improper violence, committed in a passion and I dare say heartily repented of, you will not lend your aid to abridge the few comforts of this much tried family? surely you will relent, and let Master Mildred go to Mr. Bellamy again!" While she thus spoke, Clara was resolutely regardless of all Lady Sophia's frowns and winks; and she anxiously awaited Sir Richard's answer, which was as follows: "Impossible! my dear Miss Delancy; the fiat is gone forth; the decree is registered; and I thought you had known that my decrees, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, are unchangeable, and particularly unchangeable by the

persuasions and representations of a woman."

"But surely if Lady Sophia would condescend to feel for poor Mr. Bellamy, and try to persuade you, sir....."

"Lady Sophia try to persuade me! Let me tell you, Miss Delancy, the greatest proof of understanding which I ever witnessed in that Lady is, her never presuming to try to change a resolution of mine. '*Verbum sapienti*,' Miss Delancy, or 'A word to the wise.'" Clara bowed, to show that she understood the application; and having reached her own door, she was very glad that they refused her invitation to walk in, as she was impatient to interrogate Eleanor alone.

She found Eleanor in her dressing-room, and proceeded at once to discuss the subject with her: but she obtained from her very little that was satisfactory. She owned, indeed, that Lady Sophia

had exaggerated a little, and she also; but that she was convinced it was for the best, and that Mr. Bellamy was not a proper person to have the care of Augustus Mildred.

"And are you prepared to [illegible] to the Bellamys?"

"No;—I do not mean [illegible] by thing to them: I don't [illegible] them; and I was denied to [illegible] this morning."

"But you must meet some time or other."

"Not till this affair is forgotten; as we are going to London, you know, for some months, and set off the day after the next."

"And can you bear to go away without taking leave of these amiable people? They will think that you give them up out of compliment to the Mildreds, whom Mr. Bellamy has offended: and it was

Mr. Davenant, remember, who recommended Mr. Bellamy to our guardian, he having known him in India."

"O dear! I had forgotten that," cried Eleanor. "Well, I can't help it now; and the Bellamys must think what they please. If I saw them I know I should be tempted to tell a great many fibs; therefore, as a lover of truth, you, you know, can no longer tease me to see them now. And if what we hear is true, the Bellamys will have left their present abode and be gone to live in Surrey before we return."

"Well, I will say no more," said Clara; "for I know that seeing them would be putting you in a situation of temptation. Therefore you must take the consequence, and be contented to be thought guilty of a meanness foreign to your nature, because you have yielded to one only too analogous to it."

"You are severe, Miss D[illegible]y."

"Perhaps I am so. But my feelings have been greatly hurt; as I love you too well, Eleanor, to witness any fault in you without considerable pain."

"I am not so generous as you," returned Eleanor; "for I am very glad when you err; as it is rather trying to one's self-love to have one's friend's morality mounted so much higher than one's own. It is as disagreeable as it would be to be forced to walk arm-in-arm with a giant whom one can only reach on tiptoe."

Eleanor kept her resolution, and avoided a rencontre with the Bellamys.—Clara, however, called on them, and was not sorry to find them out; as by this means she too avoided questions which she would have found it difficult to answer. And, as it was originally fixed, they set off the next day for London, where Mr. Morley had hired the same ready-furnished house which he had the preceding year; and where he was now

anxiously and hourly expecting the arrival of his nephew.

Nor did he fail to arrive a day or two after they were settled in London; and he took up his abode at a hotel near his uncle's house.

The first moments of such arrivals are usually moments of hurry, of flutter, and of indistinct vision, and the intensity of feeling on such occasions makes its very existence appear equivocal.

Sidney Davenant felt considerable emotion at seeing the beloved uncle whom he had left in the prime of his existence, now changed into an elderly though healthy-looking man. And the consciousness that he must keep this feeling concealed, threw a restraint over his manner resembling coldness. While his uncle, on beholding the graceful and fair youth of twenty-one matured into a sun-burnt man of large proportions and of dignified

appearance, could not welcome him with the familiarity of old times; but received him with embarrassed emotion, and grasped his extended hand in silence.

His wards, whom their guardian was too full at heart to name, curtsied, smiled, and did not speak. But Clara's eyes were ready to overflow with tears, as she recollected her mother, and recollected also, that as she loved Davenant dearly, she used to call him her son. The tears, and the eyes that shed them, instantly recalled to him the moment when he bade Mrs. Delancy adieu! and when her soft blue eyes glistened like those before him.

"I cannot be mistaken," said he, with a faltering voice, "you are so like HER,—you are,—you must be CLARA! So looked your dear mother," he added, after having saluted her glowing cheek, "when I bade her farewell. Ah! these are the trials that make parting and absence so terrible,

and cloud over the moments of one's return!" And Davenant, as he said this, turned in evident agitation to the window.

Clara also turned away and left the room, to shed no unpleasing tears to the memory of her mother.

"And who is this? my dear sir," said he recovering himself, and gazing on Eleanor with evident admiration. "Can this tall proper young lady be that little dark-eyed torment who used to pull your pig-tail, and do sundry tricks of the sort?"

"Yes, indeed, she is," said Morley, recovering his speech; "and she is a dark-eyed torment still, the men say."

"I can easily believe that," replied Davenant, kissing her hand repeatedly. And Eleanor was flattered that he had not saluted her cheek.

"It is evident," said she mentally, "that he met Clara with a brother's feelings." And her bright eye grew brighter while she thought thus.

When Clara returned, Davenant took her hand and drew her next him on the sofa, where he had seated himself by the side of Eleanor.

"You remind me strongly of your mother," said he, after gazing on her some time with an expression of affectionate pleasure. "And you could not resemble a more admirable woman: I loved her most dearly!"

"And very likely you will love Clara dearly," observed Morley, laughing.

"Very likely, replied Davenant," sighing. "I owed Mrs. Delancy many obligations for good advice and kind care; and for her dear sake I should be inclined to love a far less loveable object than the one before me."

Poor Clara, though she would have been sorry and disappointed if Davenant had not felt thus towards her lost parent, and had not spoken as he did, was not satisfied; for he seemed to

talk of loving her merely for her mother's sake. And alas! she feared that it would not be difficult for her to love *him* for *his own*!

"I used to call your mother MY mother, Clara," continued he.

"And I conclude," said Eleanor, "you called Clara your sister—did you not?"

"No," he replied rather archly, "I was more presumptuous—I called her my little wife."

"And did she call you her big husband?"

No, she did not honour me so far," returned he, looking at Clara, who blushed so deeply and looked so uncomfortable that he averted his eyes immediately.

"And pray," said Eleanor, with one of her bewitching smiles, "do you remember what you called me?"

"No, I do not," he replied, looking up in her face with an expression of warm

admiration. "No, I do not recollect: but I dare say the name was an appropriate one—Troublesome urchin! Teasing animal! Little torment! or something of the sort:—and now, perhaps, I shall have reason, like other men, to call you a great torment."

"I shall certainly try to make you prove your words," replied Eleanor smiling and blushing. "For now you have piqued me to the undertaking."

"Piqued you!—have I piqued you already?" returned Davenant gaily, "O welcome sound! What would not the unfortunate men to whom my uncle alluded, give, to have brought you to such a confession?"

"I am wholly unconscious," replied Eleanor, with a degree of confusion which became her infinitely, "of the force of what I said; and I beg you to believe that I spoke ignorantly, if improperly."

"The fault is wholly mine, if fault

there be," replied Davenant respectfully; "and I feel that I have presumed too much on so short a renewal of acquaintance: but you must make allowances for an intoxicated man: for intoxicated I am, to find myself after a tedious voyage restored to the society of a most dear relation, and to that of .... But I will not presume to say all I think of the present company." Then taking a hand of each of the fair cousins, he pressed them gracefully to his lips; and telling his uncle he wished to speak to him, took him into another apartment.

"I wonder," said Eleanor, going to the glass on pretence of adjusting her hair, "what the handsome Indian will say of us to his uncle, and what questions he will ask!"

"Perhaps he will not even name us," replied Clara.

"But do you think that likely?"

"No, I do not;—it is most likely that he will mention us."

"I wonder whether he will inquire into the state of our affections!"

"If he is interested in it, I conclude that he will."

"If he is interested!—he must be interested in that of his sister Clara; for he seems already to consider you as such."

Clara felt that this inference was only too like the truth: and she was hesitating how to answer, when the gentlemen returned for a moment in search of a box of papers, and withdrew again; on which Clara left the room.

Eleanor was right, Davenant had questioned his uncle respecting his fair wards; and had heard from him nothing but expressions of unqualified admiration.

But he had *not* inquired, as yet, into the state of their affections: and in busi-

ness they passed the time, till they were summoned at half-past-six to the dinner table.

The cousins, meanwhile, had thought their absence long; but Eleanor had been the most displeased at it. She had been used to make sudden and violent impressions, from the brilliant style of her beauty; and she had flattered herself that Davenant had been too much charmed with her to have willingly absented himself so long from her presence.

Clara had feared the same. But her mind was relieved, when on returning into the drawing-room after an absence, as she thought, of some length, she still found Eleanor alone: and this circumstance, which mortified Eleanor, gave her pleasure, by proving her friend's fascination less than she had imagined it. Going therefore immediately from pensive silence into renewed spirits, she began to talk incessantly; and she related many

anecdotes of her childhood, of which Davenant was the hero.

"I should have known Mr. Davenant wherever I had seen him," said Clara, "spite of his Indian complexion and increased age."

"I have not the slightest recollection of him, whatever," replied Eleanor.

"How strange! though you were nine years old when he went away."

"Yes, but I was only with my guardian during the holidays."

"Still he used to play with us both a great deal, and give us pretty things. When he went away, I remember, he gave me a little coral necklace and bracelets; and after he was gone you were so mortified because he did not give you the same, and cried so much, that my mother allowed me to give you the necklace."

"Oh! I remember it now; but I have not seen it for years. However, I dare say I have it somewhere."

"On the contrary, I have always treasured up the bracelets for the sake of the giver, with the greatest care; though I cannot wear them because they are too small for me now."

"Sentimental creature!"

At this moment the gentlemen obeyed the summons to dinner.

Davenant was so pleased with his companions that, spite of the fatigue of his journey, and spite of the cares of business, it was long after the midnight hour before he tore himself away.

He slept and dreamed of Eleanor; but when he awoke he saw the soft blue eyes of Clara swimming in tears at the recollection of the mother whom she had lost, and recalling to his mind, in all her gentle loveliness, that mother whom those tears deplored.

He found Eleanor alone when he went to his uncle's to breakfast; and she told him she had been impatiently expecting

him. The breakfast-room opened into another room, which Clara, unseen, had entered; and as the folding doors were open, she heard all that passed, while she was filling the tea-chest with fresh tea and sugar.

"I cannot but look at you with wonder, as well as admiration," said Davenant, "to think that you are the little pale meagre urchin whom I left twelve years ago; and no doubt I appear to you as much altered, though not for the better, as you are."

"No, not at all," replied Eleanor; "you are not at all altered, and I should have known you anywhere."

"Indeed!" replied Davenant, pleased and flattered by the declaration; "I am glad I made such an impression on your young heart."

Eleanor, who was not conscious of even a growing love to this amiable man, was enabled by indifference to reply with-

out any emotion to this observation, and would have done so, had she not looked up and beheld Clara, who with a look and gesture of reproach was standing behind Davenant's chair.

Spite of her habitual disregard of truth, Eleanor could not but feel humbled at the conviction that Clara had overheard the falsehood which she had just uttered. This consciousness covered her cheek with blushes, and cast down her eyes in confusion; while Davenant, attributing her embarrassment to what he had said, was deceived and flattered by it.

Clara now came forward, her fair cheek mantling as she welcomed Davenant, and felt the affectionate pressure of his hand. Mr. Morley followed in all the florid health of green old age; and Davenant, as he cast his eyes on the blooming girls and on his blooming uncle, and then looked in the glass, declared that he was ashamed to show his yellow face amongst them.

"Yellow face!" cried Eleanor, "brown you mean; rather the hue of manhood than of illness."

"The hue of age and climate, you ought to say; the tint of bilious tendency."

"No, indeed, I do not; I am sure I should never suspect from your complexion that you came from India; but I should only conclude you had been some where or other exposed to a burning sun."

"You flatter me."

"O dear, no! I speak what I think;—Clara, is it not so? Should you know from Mr. Davenant's appearance that he came from India—and is he at all yellow-looking?"

Clara, who had seen Davenant's eye sparkle at being assured that he looked much healthier than he felt, was confounded at the necessity under which Eleanor had placed her, of either telling a

falsehood or of wounding the feelings of Davenant: but it was impossible for her really to hesitate a moment, and she replied in a faint voice—"As beauty of complexion is of no consequence to a man, I hope I shall not hurt Mr. Davenant by owning that he does, in my eyes, look as if he came from India, and that he is rather yellow."

Used as Eleanor was to Clara's rigid adherence to truth in general, she always thought, like all persons who never act on principle themselves, that Clara would fib like her neighbours, when any strong temptation was held out to her. And knowing that the fear of giving Mr. Davenant pain, and the wish of giving him pleasure, were at this moment uppermost in Clara's mind, she expected—being unable to conceive the virtue which she had not—that Clara would join her in flattering the yellow nabob on his fair looks.

But though she keenly felt the moral superiority of her cousin, she was agreeably surprised in one respect at Clara's honesty; as she saw that it would enable her by similar questions to make Clara at any time mortify the self-love of Davenant.

Mr. Morley, who had listened in silence to this discussion on complexion, was even more surprised at Eleanor's affrontery in admiring that of his nephew, than at Clara's boldness in telling the truth. And before Davenant could speak, after Clara's specimen of unyielding veracity, the old gentleman exclaimed—"Upon my word, Sidney, I am glad to find you are not in any danger of being spoiled here; for I see the harm Eleanor might do you by her flattery, Clara will counteract by her sincerity."

"My *flattery*, sir, I assure you, is no flattery; and I mean what I say as much as Clara does."

"Well, my dear, all this may be very true; for there is such a thing, I am told, as 'love at first sight;' and love is blind: so I am prepared now to hear you exclaim, in the words of the poet, altered for the occasion,

> "Yellow he's not, or I no yellow spy;
> He is all beauty, or all blindness I."

And Eleanor, a little abashed by this deserved rebuke of her guardian, was absolutely shamed into silence.

Davenant meanwhile felt rather foolish. He was conscious that Eleanor's expressed opinion had given him pleasure, and that Clara's had mortified him; and he was ashamed of the weakness into which his vanity had betrayed him. But if Eleanor really was blinded by growing partiality for him, that idea was indeed delightful.—"Yet, coxcomb that I am," thought Davenant the next moment; "how is it possible I can believe such

nonsense? Can I be so contemptibly vain as to fancy that, like Cæsar, I came—I saw—I conquered!" And every one of the party had eaten an egg before the silence of the breakfast table was again broken.

It was broken first by Morley, who sung, or rather tried to sing, the first lines of

"Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
Or days of lang syne—"

"Sidney," said he, "one of the girls must sing that to you; it is appropriate to your return."

"You sing, then?—do you?"

"Yes," said Clara.

"Yes, a little," replied Eleanor.

"And do you play?"

"Yes," said Eleanor, "I play the pianoforte and the harp a little."

"O yes! I knew it must be a little—*C'est le mot pour dire*—a lady's little on such occasions is simply said for modesty's

sake. And you, Miss Delancy, do you play a little?"

"No, I play a great deal, on the harp, the guitar, and pianoforte."

"My dear nephew, you don't know Clara, or you would know that she never says any thing for modesty's sake, or any sake but that of truth;—she is the most scrupulous little person in the creation; and I really believe that if her life depended on telling even a white lie she would not utter it."

There was an expression in Davenant's countenance when Morley said this, which well repaid Clara for the pain which she had felt in being forced to tell a probably unwelcome truth to him. For a moment he looked at her in silence.

"How I honour and admire such scruples, as you call them! How rare and how precious are they! I have been living so long amongst the most lying nation in the world, that truth is even more delightful to me than ever."

Eleanor instantly took the hint, and told a few fibs to proclaim the devotedness of her admiration of a virtue which in reality she despised, at least in trifles: but she spoke with such hurry and such vehemence, and so devoid of that tone of sincerity which comes from the heart, and which no art can imitate, that if Davenant had been of a suspicious nature, he must have seen that she was speaking a language unusual to her.

It was not long before Davenant, who was very fond of music, became urgent to hear the friends sing and play: and his disappointment in hearing Clara was very great. Eleanor, who felt no emotion, was perfectly mistress of her voice, and sang her best; but poor Clara, who earnestly wished to shine, and was always only too distrustful of her own powers, was so hoarse from alarm and feeling, that she appeared to great disadvantage: and Davenant could not help remarking to Eleanor when Clara

had left the room, that he was sorry he had urged Miss Delancy to sing, for he found by her hoarseness she had a bad cold though she did not say so.

"She is always rather hoarse," replied Eleanor carelessly: nor did she much misrepresent; for, as Clara seldom sang at her ease, she was usually hoarse; though Eleanor knew that when in voice and in courage her friend's singing was infinitely superior to her own."

Time went on, and saw Mr. Davenant every day the guest of his uncle and every evening attending the fair cousins, and their *chaperone* to parties and places of amusement; and while Clara, conscious that he was becoming daily dearer to her heart, was rendered, spite of her ingenuousness, increasingly cold and reserved in Davenant's presence, by that timid delicacy which shrinks from testifying an unsolicited preference, Eleanor, whose tender feelings were not engaged

in the contest, and who was restrained by no such delicacy of sentiment, expressed more regard for Davenant than she really felt, and gratified his self-love by the warmth of her manner, as much as Clara wounded it by the coldness of hers, till at length he was disposed to put on the silken chains which Eleanor tendered to him, though both his judgement and taste led him to prefer Clara Delancy.

As Eleanor found that Davenant was pleased with the idea of having been always remembered with pleasure by his young companions, she used to relate to him, when they were alone, circumstances that had passed before he went abroad, which the unsuspicious Clara had repeated to her of herself and Davenant, and of her feelings towards this friend and playfellow. But Eleanor used to relate them of *herself* and *him*. And while Davenant could not but admire these proofs of early sensibility and infantine

gratitude, he used to sigh as he reflected on Clara's apparent want of these affectionate recollections and proofs of grateful attachment.

"*She* never reminds me," said he mentally, "of past scenes and past kindnesses; yet I loved her and did not care much for Eleanor. But perhaps she has an attachment, and I will inquire of my uncle."

Clara one day, while arranging her work-basket, let fall a small box, which, opening as it fell, disclosed a pair of coral bracelets. "Do you remember these?" said she to Davenant who was alone with her.

"I think I do."

"You gave them to me when you went to India."

"And was there not a necklace also?"

"There was," replied Clara blushing, "but I gave it away."

"Gave it away!" echoed Davenant.

"Yes, it was begged of me, and...."

"You could not refuse it, certainly, Miss Delancy; for I conclude the pleader was *eloquent.*"

"Very, it was......"

Here some company entered, and the subject was dropt and never resumed.

A few days after, Eleanor having found by chance the long-forgotten coral necklace, which the good nature of Clara had induced her to yield to her tears and entreaties, resolved to make a merit of having preserved it with the unsuspecting Davenant; and when she was alone with him one day, she showed him this necklace, which she said, was a *gift of his.*

"Indeed!" said he: "I do not remember giving *you* a necklace; I gave one to Clara, and a pair of bracelets—the necklace she gave away: and she was going to tell me to whom, when we were interrupted."

This speech made Eleanor fear her

falsehood might be detected: but recovering herself, she said with ready art, "Yes, she gave it to me; for, thinking she did not much value it, as it was become too small for her to wear, I begged it of her, to give a little girl. This necklace nothing would have tempted me to part with, as it was your gift to myself, you know."

"Thank you, thank you! kind girl," said Davenant. "For my part," added he in a tone of pique, "I wonder Clara kept even the bracelets."

"You forget," said Eleanor, "that Clara was old enough to know that you might remember that you had given her them, and might on your return expect to see them;— you know she was some years my senior?"

"Some years!"

"Yes."

"I had forgotten that," replied Davenant, "then she was indeed old enough

to value the gift of a friend:—but she must have been very little for her age."

When Davenant was alone with his uncle a day or two after this conversation, he said to him with some emotion, "Give me leave to ask you, sir, whether the affections of your fair wards are disengaged?"

"Eleanor's were, certainly, when you first came from India, Sidney; but now I am pretty sure they are not," he replied with a significant smile.

Davenant blushed, and perhaps looked pleased; but with some embarrassment he said, "And Miss Delancy, sir, is her heart her own still?" And as his alarmed uncle surveyed him with a very inquisitive glance, he coloured, and went to the window.

"So so!" thought the cautious and money-loving old man, "I will soon put a stop to this folly.—Why no, if I had not before suspected, nay known, that

Clara had an attachment, I should have been sure of it now," he replied: "for really, Sidney, you are such an agreeable creature, that nothing, I think, could have preserved Clara's heart from your fascinations, but a prior atttachment."

"You flatter me, sir. Then Miss Delancy is attached, is engaged, is she, sir?"

"Yes, I may venture to say Yes; and to a poor lieutenant, in a marching regiment of the name of Beaumont. A fine handsome young fellow he is, to be sure; and Clara prevailed on me to give him the run of my house when he was quartered near us. I thought at first it was from pure benevolence, because the youth was said to be lowly born, and no one noticed him; and it was very like Clara to notice those whom others look down upon:—but other persons were not so candid as I was."

"And are you sure, sir, it was more than pure benevolence after all?"

"Yes—I am sure:—not that she ever named him to me, or gave me any hint of the business, because she knew I would not consent. But she will be of age in two years, and it is no great time to wait; and in the meanwhile he calls here whenever he comes to London, and I know they correspond."

"Ah then, it is so—I see it is so!—and what I have fancied coldness towards myself, was only principle and propriety of feeling," exclaimed Davenant. "Sir," added he in a faltering voice, "the poor lieutenant is, in my eyes, a rich and enviable man."

So saying he quitted the room, leaving his uncle rejoiced that by a little white lying he had prevented his nephew from indulging a romantic preference for one of his wards, and probably secured his addressing the other, as he thought that Eleanor with fifty thousand pounds was a much better match for his nephew than Clara with only thirty.

"And after all," thought he, "I have only declared sure and undoubted what I have reason to suspect is a positive fact. It is true, Clara did tell me that she had no thought of marrying Beaumont, though she had a great regard for him. But then on such subjects all women fancy themselves privileged to lie—aye, even a Clara Delancy."

Still he did not feel quite satisfied with himself when he made this assertion, nor was he sure that he had done right in not acquainting Davenant with Clara's declaration on this subject. "Yet after all," said he to himself, "there is no harm in telling a white lie to serve a friend, nor in a little mental reservation; and Clara," added he, with a feeling of conscious pique, and perhaps of painful inferiority, "Clara is so troublesome with her scrupulosity sometimes, that I think Sidney will be happier with Eleanor."

When Davenant left his uncle he re-

turned to his lodgings, to hold a last parley as it were with his heart, and endeavour to find out whether it was too full of the image of Clara Delancy, to allow him to pay his addresses to Eleanor Musgrave;—a step which he saw his uncle wished, and he feared that Eleanor not only wished but expected from him.

Davenant had returned to England disposed to fall in love with Clara Delancy: for though her mother was some years older than himself, he had loved her with all the ardour of a boy's first passion. Still he had had resolution to leave England without disclosing his attachment to its object; as he knew that a woman of her well regulated feelings was not likely to return it; and that such a disclosure would only serve to check that kind confidence, and that expression of even maternal affection, which the unconscious Mrs. Delancy expressed towards him.

But her image accompanied him to India, and was probably a sort of guardian angel to his steps: for the dread of lowering his character in the esteem of Mrs. Delancy was consciously to himself a frequent restraint on him in moments of temptation to evil; while the wish to deserve her good opinion was an excitement with him to virtuous enterprise: and "O that *she* had been some years *younger*, or *I* some years *older!*" was the wish of his youthful heart; while he soon after used to recollect with pleasure that Mrs. Delancy had a daughter, and that daughter promised to be like her mother.

Time in the meanwhile passed away, and he was returned to England still young enough to be the lover of Mrs. Delancy's daughter: he had found her too the image of her mother, and, barring a little coldness, not more like her in person than in mind:—but she, he

was told, loved, and was engaged to another! therefore he must try to forget those prospects long so fondly cherished, and devote to one, who seemed to be already disposed to devote hers to him, those affections which he now felt were only too much at the disposal of Clara Delancy.

"Yes, yes," said he to himself, "I must cease to think of Clara, and learn to think only of Eleanor. But I do not think I am bound to woo Eleanor seriously yet. No—not yet:" and he resolved not to be rash in his proceedings.

That day Mr. Morley received a letter from the country, in which amongst other news he learnt that Mr. Bellamy had removed into Surrey; and that Mr. Harrison, finding that Mr. Somerville and his other creditors positively refused to sign his certificate, by which means he was prevented accepting a share which

was offered him in a lucrative business, had left the town with his wife and all his family, and was removed no one knew whither, for he had not been heard of since his departure.

This account of the Harrisons made Clara very thoughtful. But Eleanor was too full of herself, and her own hopes, to bear to dwell for a moment on a subject which, had she done so, might have made *her* thoughtful too.

In the evening, Clara and Eleanor accompanied by a married lady and Davenant went to a small party, the amusement of which was to consist of amateur music and dancing.

The evening opened with duets and songs by Clara, Eleanor, and other amateur performers; which were succeeded by quadrilles, in which Eleanor, animated by the wish to shine, looked so pre-eminently handsome, and danced so gracefully, that Davenant, who was not dancing,

followed her wherever she moved, with delighted admiration, and seemed to hang on every word which fell from her beautiful lips.

Clara, who had sprained her foot, could not dance; and while she saw the effect of Eleanor's graceful performance, with which she was then unable to compete, she almost sickened at the sight, and fixed her eyes with salutary perseverance on the music of a quadrille which she was playing.

Quadrilles being over, waltzes began: and Davenant, leading Eleanor to a seat near Clara, said with an air of triumph, "I am glad to find you do not waltz, Miss Musgrave—nor you, Miss Delancy."

Clara bowed, saying "No; I disapprove waltzes, and never waltzed in my life."

Eleanor did not say the same; indeed she dared not in the hearing of Clara: for when her guardian, who forbade her to waltz, was not present, she had dis-

regarded his prohibition, and waltzed frequently—a disobedience which she regretted now she heard Davenant's opinion: and she had the grace to look rather confused when Davenant went on to express his dislike of waltzing.

"Do not mistake me, however," said he; "I do not mean to say that I consider all young ladies who waltz as devoid of modesty, delicacy, or proper feeling; but I feel that I should wish my sister, or my mistress, or my wife, to have a sort of untaught aversion to the familiarity which waltzing induces. I would have her prize too highly, from self-respect, the sort of favour which a woman confers on a man with whom she waltzes, to be willing to bestow it on any one of her acquaintance. I would wish her to preserve her person unprofaned by any clasping arm, but that of privileged affection. For indeed, dear Miss Mus-

grave, if I saw even a woman whom I loved, borne along the circling waltz, as I see these young ladies now borne, I should be tempted to address her partner in the words of a noble poet—' What you touch you may take.'"

Eleanor listened, fanned herself, avoided the eye of Clara, which she saw was seeking hers, while she expressed her warmest acquiescence in all Davenant said, and forced herself to add some words of more than assent to the "Certainly—Very true—O dear, yes!"—with which she had filled up the pauses in his observations.

Eleanor now rose in order to change the subject, and pretended to want to speak to a friend across the room. At this moment a very fine young man came up and said to her, "Don't you waltz tonight?—Let me lead you to the set now forming."

"I waltz!" replied Eleanor with great quickness: "I waltz!—I would not waltz for the world!"

"No!—I am sure I have seen you waltz, and waltzed with you."

"Never. You are dreaming, Mr. Fielding. I *detest* waltzing."

The young man was going to persist in his very just assertions; but Eleanor contrived, unseen by Davenant, who had listened to this dialogue with suspicious misgivings, to frown him and wink him into silence; and apologizing for a mistake which seemed to wound her feelings so much, Mr. Fielding bowed and withdrew; while Eleanor was glad to conceal her perturbed countenance from Davenant, by going to speak to the lady mentioned above.

She took care, however, when Davenant was not in sight, to seek Mr. Fielding, and explain to him, after her manner, why she had denied so positively an

undeniable matter of fact. "It was," said she, "because I was afraid that Mr. Davenant should tell my guardian if I owned that I had ever waltzed; and you know that he disapproves waltzing, and would have forbidden me perhaps to come to a waltzing ball again:—so pray forgive me, Fielding, and accept this apology."

"Forgive thee! Yes! sweet deceiver!" replied Fielding, with something between a sneer and a smile on his face:

"If from thy lips some milk-white falsehoods fall,
Look in thy face and one forgets them all."

Eleanor tried to smile; but she felt humbled, and heartily did she wish this circumstance had not occurred.

The dancing was now over for a time, and the music was resumed. Glee succeeded to glee and catch to catch; when, to Clara's great surprise, Eleanor urged Davenant to favour them with a

song without music, which he used to sing to them sometimes at home. And as Davenant did not sing well enough to sing at such a party, she felt all the jealous fear of delicate affection, lest its object should appear to disadvantage. Her expressive countenance betrayed to Davenant what she thought; and approaching her he said, "I see that you are afraid I shall expose myself."

"I have, I must own," said Clara, "an objection to your singing alone. It is a sort of exhibition which does not accord, in my opinion, with the dignity of your character. I cannot wish *you* to show off as a singer amongst such persons as these."

Clara spoke almost pettishly; for she was chagrined at the evident influence which Eleanor and her flatteries had obtained over Davenant's better judgement. And he felt a little piqued in his turn.

"Perhaps you think me," he returned, "too old either to sing or dance?"

"By no means," she replied; "I have stated to you my only objection."

But casting an angry glance aside at Clara, Eleanor declared that "she talked like an idiot; and that he should sing." And he was so surrounded and so pressed to favour them with the Hindoo air and words which Miss Musgrave had so much extolled, that he was forced to comply; casting, as he did so, a supplicating look at Clara, who most earnestly wished herself out of the room.

For, as his voice was a bass one of no particularly fine tone, and as no one but himself understood the words which he was singing, the exhibition was certainly one beneath the acknowledged talents and merit of Mr. Davenant. He sung too under the disadvantage of excessive fear, increased by the consciousness that

an eye, whose glance of approbation he highly valued, was bent in painful though kind anxiety on the ground; and that, however loud might be the praises of others, and even of Eleanor, he should not be satisfied with, nor reconciled to, himself, unless he received applause from the speaking look and truth-telling lip of Clara Delancy.

He ended.—He was applauded even by clapping of hands and by words of animated praise from Eleanor. But neither Clara's eyes nor lips vouchsafed a word or look of approbation; and wounded self-love whispered, "Why should I for one moment care whether I please the fastidious Clara, when the kind and equally judicious Eleanor is pleased with my performance?"

Davenant was now asked to sing in a glee; and he complied.

"You see I am going to expose my-

self again," said he to Clara, almost petulantly.

"If you do, it will at least be in company," she answered. "Glee singing is commonly a very imperfect and bad performance, unless the performers have been in the habit of singing together and have practised beforehand. I always consider the clamorous eagerness often testified for glee and catch singing, as the resource of vanity and egotism, that can't bear to be quiet and silent, and had rather sing a thing ill than not sing at all."

"You are really a severe examiner of motives," replied Davenant. "I did not expect it from you. You are a bright-looking May morning, that cuts one in the face with a keen north-easter. But you are right. However, marshal your egotists, and let us get the task over as soon as possible."

She did so; and four persons who never

even met before, prepared to sing together in perfect harmony and perfect time.

Clara's quick ear, however, soon discovered that Davenant had now undertaken nothing to which he was not fully equal; and the style in which he executed the bass, and at sight too, was so gratifying to her, that she could not help every now and then turning on him looks of evident satisfaction. The other singers did better than could have been expected, and the glee was *encored*.

When it was over, Clara with delighted eagerness thanked Davenant for the pleasure which he had given her, and Eleanor's praise was faint to that of Clara.

Davenant listened with gratified feelings to all she observed; and taking her hand said, with great animation, "It is delightful, indeed, to be praised by you; because one is so sure that you never say more than you really think."

Eleanor heard this just tribute with a very painful emotion; and in order to seem not to hear it, she appeared busy in turning over a music-book. An instrument in the next room now played a favourite quadrille, and the other music was discontinued. But Davenant, whose wounded self-love was now healed again, still lingered near Clara, when Eleanor came and claimed his promise to dance a quadrille with her.

"What!" exclaimed Clara, "are you going to dance a quadrille? I thought you said you never danced one in your life?"

"Nor did I: but your cousin says she is sure I can, and that I can soon learn; and as she has volunteered being my partner, and as I am proud to be her slave, I am going, as you think no doubt, to expose myself now in another line."

Clara did not reply; but she looked perturbed: yet she could not help fol-

lowing to the dancing-room; and, like the bird with the rattlesnake, was forced in spite of herself to gaze on what was destruction at least to her peace, though not to her life.

Davenant, like other persons under similar circumstances, blundered, though every movement was rehearsed, and invariably *chasséed* to the right when he should have gone to the left. Nor did he dance the better for knowing that the eyes of Clara were observing his movements. And once he accosted her, while he rested from his exertions, and said, "I fear that you are surprised at my folly in complying with Miss Musgrave's desire."

"No," she replied, as she turned away and left the room: "No—Hercules spun, you know." And Davenant almost thought that Clara was rather jealous. "Is it possible," said he to

himself, "that I can be wrong about the poor lieutenant?"

Soon after, finding that he blundered worse than ever, he entreated to be allowed to resign his place. But Eleanor declared that "if he retired she would;" and he was therefore obliged to finish his unpleasant task.

But as soon as it was over, Davenant took advantage of Eleanor's stopping to speak to some lady, to go in search of Clara.

"Hercules has done spinning for the present," said he to her: "but I suppose you think him only too ready to begin again?"

"I do, as he sees no harm in it—no degradation I mean."

"And you do?"

"To say the truth," replied Clara, "I may be very absurd,—but I do not like to see any men dance. And I think

that quadrilles, if not even country dances, would look better if danced by women only, or with only *very* young men. Few men move gracefully; and when dancing, as it is now, is quite an exhibition, I do wonder when I see men of sense, and men of a certain age and rank in life, exhibit themselves with the attempted steps and gestures of dancing-masters, without their *sçavoir faire* and agility. But never in my life could I bear to see a man whom I esteemed and respected dance. I remember once, when a gentleman to whom I looked up as the most admirable and captivating of men (who is now, alas! no more) was made steward to a ball in our neighbourhood, and I was told that he meant to open the ball himself; I declared that if he did, I would leave the room, for that I could not bear to see the object of my highest esteem and admiration degrade himself by an act so much beneath him. But

he did not dance, and my feelings were spared."

"And is it only the happy object of your esteem and admiration then," said Davenant, grasping her hand and looking at her with eyes expressive of animated tenderness, "whom you cannot bear to see dance? If so, I may be proud of your aversion to see me exhibit."

Clara, instantly recalled to the full force of what she had implied by this unguarded speech, blushed in the utmost confusion; and trying to disengage her hand from his tenacious pressure said, "I said esteem and admiration only, Mr. Davenant, not love."

"True," said Davenant, suddenly relinquishing her hand, "they are not *love*, indeed:" and turning away, he went in search of Eleanor; leaving Clara so unable to reconcile the expression with which he had regarded her, and the words which he had uttered with exclusive and de-

cided preference of Eleanor, that she more than suspected he was, with regard to herself, under some *false impression.*

It was now supper time, and several little tables ready covered were crowded into the room; at which different parties seated themselves.

Eleanor, who was excessively jealous of the deference for Clara's opinion, and the desire of appearing to advantage in her eyes, which Davenant had manifested that evening, contrived to prevent him from sitting at the same table with Clara, by fixing herself at a different one: for Davenant, she knew, if inclination did not lead him to remain by her side, must do it in compliance with custom, since he had just been her partner in the dance. The tables, however, were rather near to each other, and Eleanor had soon reason to be alarmed at their proximity, as Mr. Fielding (the young man to whom she

had unblushingly made apologies and given reasons for the falsehood which she had uttered respecting waltzing) was seated at the same table with Clara, of whom he was suspected of being the admirer; but, as his fortune and expectations gave him no pretensions whatever to her hand, he was never known to express his admiration of her, except when he had been betrayed into drinking too much wine; and he was one of those unfortunate persons who, though usually sober even to abstemiousness, have no sooner drunk a certain quantity than they become incapable of restraint, and drink themselves in a short time into a temporary madness.

This painful result of intoxication soon showed itself in Fielding; and every fresh glass increased the evidences of it.

Clara, meanwhile, patiently bore for a little time the words of muttered admiration with which he addressed her;

while he was ever and anon looking at Eleanor, and murmuring out "Fine woman!—but lies like a chambermaid," and other things of the sort, which Eleanor feared Davenant would overhear; and she also feared he would see the looks which accompanied them.

Clara was alarmed for herself, and distressed for Eleanor; she therefore rose and broke up the party. When she did so, Fielding rose also, and exclaimed, "Stop, Miss Delancy, do you ever waltz?"

"Never; you know I never do."

"True, you say so; and *therefore* I know you never do; for you are all truth, all honour. Look at her—see that fine form and upright, dignified carriage; and her mind is as upright as her person. Here's a bumper to her health," he added, filling a glass as he spoke, and drinking it off; while he held Clara's gown to detain her near him.

"My dear Charles," said Clara kindly,

"let me go, and do not, I entreat you, drink any more."

"Not drink any more! Not drink," he replied; "O Clara Delancy!" and immediately sung the following song in the sweetest voice, and with the most touching expression possible:—

"Nay, bid me not forswear that bowl,
Through which alone I'm ever blest;
The charm that can despair controul,
And give my sleepless pillow rest!

With pleasures sober day denies,
Night's festive moments bless my lot;
Recall'd no more are love's vain sighs,
And e'en my scanty store's forgot.

Then let me quaff the nectar down,
Which makes me rich, and makes me bold;
And bids me dare that passion own,
So long endured, but never told.

Too soon despair and day will come,
And I my dream of bliss resign;
Till then, avaunt my dreary home!
Here joy, and even hope, are mine."

Clara, distressed at this public homage, and affected by the song and the singing, now took the arm of Eleanor and begged her to hasten from the room: but Fielding followed them, and seized Eleanor's arm. She turned round, and calling him "Dear Charles," begged him to let her go. He obeyed; but looking at her very scornfully said, "Dear Charles!—I don't know you, madam—never saw you in my life—never spoke to you in my life—you must be dreaming, madam;" parodying Eleanor's words to him and mimicking her manner.

Davenant, who, though he did not understand Fielding's meaning, felt that he meant to annoy Eleanor, turned round with an intention of desiring him to desist: but luckily Clara remarked his air and gesture; and putting him back with her hand, gently took hold of Fielding's arm, and hurrying him forward into the music-room said, "My good Charles,

you will be very very sorry to-morrow to recollect, or to be told, how much to-night you have distressed me and Eleanor."

"Yes, I shall be sorry to have distressed *you*; but as to Eleanor...."

"Hush! remember she is my friend, and in distressing and insulting her you distress and insult me."

"You!—you!—O Miss Delancy! I insult you!—you whom I would at any time die to serve!"

"If this be true, show your friendship by abstaining from further improprieties, and go home; for you know you are not fit to stay."

"True, true," said he; "I will—I will—prove my loyalty by my obedience;—so farewell! O Clara, Clara!—*In vino veritas* the proverb says, and I exemplify it whenever I drink too much wine and am near you. Good night, pity and forgive me!" So saying he wrung her hand, and turned back on his way to leave the house:

but meeting Eleanor and Davenant, he could not forbear giving her a parting pang; and drawing up and pretending to fan himself as she did, he said—"I waltz!—would not waltz for the world. I waltz!—never waltzed in my life. You are dreaming, Mr. Fielding;" then with a low bow to her of mock respect, he ran out of the room.

"I am so glad he is gone," said Eleanor, trembling as she spoke; "he is so mad, after a few glasses of wine, that he is really quite terrible; and as he is too both proud and poor, I wounded his pride by refusing to waltz with him; and because in his wild fancies he thinks he has seen me waltz, and has waltzed with me, his pride has taken alarm, and he behaves as you see."

This speech, which was a very plausible one, quieted the suspicions which Davenant was again beginning to entertain of Eleanor's veracity on this subject.

When Davenant and Eleanor entered the music-room they found Clara surrounded by a party, who were entreating her to sing a ballad to the Spanish guitar, which was now produced and put into her hand. She complied instantly: and being full of anxious thought, which rendered it a matter of indifference to her whether she sung well or ill, she had unimpaired possession of all her powers.

Accordingly she sung, with exquisite voice and feeling, the following words, to the tune of "De'il take the wars."

"Joy to my love, this cruel war is ended,
Peace gives thy soldier to thy arms again;
Soon love's fond kiss with tears as tender blended,
Well shall pay whole years of pain.

And shall we meet again in cloudless pleasure,
Who parted torn with wild and hopeless woe!
Yes, dearest girl, my bosom's only treasure,
Guardian powers have will'd it so;

Have will'd, from days of sorrow,
From nights that hoped no morrow,
Our present bliss should borrow,
By contrast's power, new zest.
And when again we meet,
Will pity's throb be sweet,
O'er hearts that fondly mourn
For those who'll ne'er return,
While *we united* are,
And are MOST BLEST."

"Miss Delancy really sung *con amore*," said Davenant with a sigh; and he whispered to Eleanor, "I suppose she was thinking of her poor lieutenant."

"What do you know of the poor lieutenant?" said Eleanor.

"Your uncle has told me all about him—Do you not think she thought of *him*?"

"I am *sure* she did," she replied, resolved to keep up in Davenant's mind an impression which she believed favourable to her own interests:—"but it was very

wrong in my guardian to tell tales—I have been more honourable."

"Because more *trusted*, perhaps?"

Eleanor did not answer, she only smiled significantly. Soon after the party broke up, and the carriages were announced. Mr. Morley's carriage was now called: but as the gentleman who went in search of it said, on his return, that it was some way off, Clara, who wished to get home, proposed walking to it; and her companions consented.

Clara and this gentleman and the *chaperone* went first, Davenant and Eleanor followed. Unfortunately their carriage stood opposite the door of a fashionable coffee-house, whence four young men issued, warm with Champagne and Burgundy, just as Davenant and Eleanor were passing; and one of the gentlemen very rudely stood in the way of Eleanor, and prevented her reaching the carriage in which Clara and the other lady were

already seated; the former of whom, by springing into the carriage hastily to avoid this party, had hurt her sprained foot severely.

Davenant pushed the intruder away with his arm: on which the young man thrust it back rather violently, and desired to know what he meant by striking a gentleman; and catching hold of his coat, declared he should not go till he had given him satisfaction.

Davenant at last broke from him, and placed the screaming and terrified Eleanor in the coach; then turning back, as his persevering foe seized his arm, he said in a low voice, "Do not frighten the ladies—here is my card, if you have any thing to say to me to-morrow." Then jumping in, he desired the servant to drive to the house of the lady who was with them; and they drove off before the young man had read the card, which

Clara had seen given, and she had also seen his angry countenance by the light of the lamp.

She resolved therefore to inform her guardian of what had passed, that very night if he was not in bed; and if he was, she determined to send him a note previous to his rising the next day, and desire him to go to Davenant before any thing unpleasant could take place; and with this intention she tried to calm her anxious feelings in the meanwhile. But that was no easy matter; for Eleanor, to whom the evening had presented a number of little mortifications, which had overcome her usual buoyant spirits, was now completely subdued by this unpleasant alarm; and she gave way to violent tears, almost amounting to hysterical affection. During this agitation she leaned her head against Davenant's shoulder; and as he tenderly supported and

kindly soothed her, poor Clara, who was really enduring excessive pain from her foot, was not made more easy by witnessing this scene.

The coach stopped to set down the *chaperone* and went on again, while Clara looked out of the window in order to avoid observing what she now feared might be the tenderness of *declared* lovers; and as she did so, she lifted up her full and burthened heart in supplication that she might be enabled to bear with fortitude and calmness this severe trial.

Scarcely had her thoughts returned to earth again, and she had begun to suspect, on Eleanor's redoubling her sobs, that she was now feigning what she had before really felt, in order to prolong the tender assiduities of Davenant, when, by the light of the lamps, she saw the same young man running along-side of the coach who had assaulted Davenant; and

she concluded that he meant to demand the promised satisfaction that night, with a view to a meeting the next day.

Terror of the most painful nature now took possession of her: but she had resolution not to mention what she saw; and Eleanor contrived so completely to absorb Davenant's attention by her now feigned indisposition, that the real illness and deep anxiety of Clara were not even suspected by either of them: and a feeling which she could not conquer, made her resolve not to complain and ask to put her foot up on the seat by Eleanor—no, not though she *died* from the forbearance. And while Davenant uttered and Eleanor heard the words "Dear girl! My sweet Eleanor!"—even Clara's presence seemed forgotten by them both.

At length they reached home, and Davenant insisted on taking out the apparently nerveless Eleanor in his arms.

He then returned to hand out Clara, wondering that he had never seen her offer to assist Eleanor in any way as she rose to get to the step of the coach. But his wonder ceased, when, on reaching the carriage, and receiving no answer when he announced his return, he ascended the step and found Clara cold, pale, and insensible in one corner of the seat.

Self-reproved for his long neglect of her, he now bore her from the coach with trembling anxiety to a sofa in the dining-parlour, where her appearance so much resembled death that Davenant experienced considerable alarm, till Eleanor assured him she had only fainted, and that stimulating scents would soon revive her. But there were none in the house; and a gentleman who had entered the parlour after Davenant and Clara, now ran out of it again, and returned soon with salts and hartshorn, which Eleanor took without looking at him;

and on their application Clara revived, to the great relief of Davenant, who demanded of Eleanor to what she attributed Clara's illness.

Eleanor was ready with an answer: she therefore whispered in reply, "Did you not hear at the party that the 54th regiment of foot was ordered to the West Indies immediately?"

"I did; and is that the regiment where.... ?"

"Yes."

"Oh, then all this is accounted for."

Clara now recovered her senses, and opened her eyes: but the moment she beheld the stranger who had followed the party in, who had fetched the medicines, and who had now retired into the back of the room, she eagerly exclaimed, fixing on him a look of terror and aversion, "What does that man do here? and what brings him hither?" And as she spoke, she evidently threw her right arm

round Davenant, who hung over her, as if she meant to protect him.

This exclamation turned all eyes on the stranger, who gracefully approaching, though in considerable emotion, exclaimed, "Be easy, sweet soul! and never let me see such an expression of hate and terror of me again on the sweetest face in the world, or I shall die of it for ever. Mr. Davenant, I am the unfortunate gentleman to whom you gave your card just now."

"Then, sir, let us retire."

"No, sir, I must speak here.—When I saw your name, I thought the sight would have killed me. And have I (said I to myself) been affronting that noble and generous Mr. Davenant! who not only saved my poor brother John's life in India, but his fame, and very likely his soul too!' So I ran as fast as I could after the carriage, which, luckily for me, stopped to set down; and here I am with

a head full of wine, but a heart full of gratitude, to make any apology that you think fit. O Mr. Davenant, what would poor John O'Byrne feel if he knew that his brother had lifted his arm against you! O sir! if you have any pity in your nature, do lay your cane across my shoulder, and then I shall be easy."

All this was uttered with such volubility that Davenant could not interrupt him. But now taking his hand, he said, "he could not have been sorry for any circumstance that had made him known to Colonel O'Byrne, a gallant and much-respected officer, if that circumstance had not alarmed the ladies present; and he assured him, that of his pardon he was certain; but that he required him to ask that of Miss Delancy and Miss Musgrave."

"Oh! you are only too generous to me," replied O'Byrne: "ask pardon of these sweet creatures!—that I will;—but

how often? Must I not come every day for a month, and ask it at stated hours? But no, that would be reward and not punishment, and I know I only deserve the latter: And yet," added he with a deep sigh as he gazed on Clara, "Miss Delancy's look of aversion gave me a pang sufficient to punish the greatest of all sinners.—Ladies, am I forgiven? And will you, Miss Delancy, promise never to look at me in that manner again?"

"I will," she replied, offering him her hand; "except you deserve it again."

"Then I am happy," he exclaimed.

"And that other young lady forgives you also."

"Then good night;—and I hope, Mr. Davenant, you will allow me to profit by your card—not to take your life—but endeavour to surprise your friendship; for I would rather be the friend of such

a man as you, than the aide-de-camp of an emperor."

So saying he withdrew. And Davenant soon followed him, as Clara, though her mind was now relieved of the fear which had combined with excessive bodily agony to cause her faintness, was unable to sit up a moment longer; and Eleanor and her own maid assisted her to her room.

But when there, she was unable to sleep from bodily and mental pain: for, after the scene she had witnessed in the coach, she could not doubt but that Davenant intended to make proposals to Eleanor, if he had not already done so, and she was very sure they would be accepted. "Still," thought Clara, "his manner to me is at times full as tender as it is to Eleanor."

The next morning Davenant called in about noon. He too had passed a sleepless night. Colonel O'Byrne, (whom he found in the street,) after going into a

rapture concerning Clara, hoped he might, without presumption, ask whether he was engaged to Miss Delancy?

"O dear, no!" was the reply.

"But is there no love at all between you? for indeed, Mr. Davenant, I could not but think the sweet creature threw her fine arm round you, to protect you from me, in a manner very like love, and made you the most enviable of men in my eyes."

"Indeed I am not so happy," replied Davenant. But he himself could not help remembering, and with excessive emotion, that Clara had thrown her arm round him, and had gazed on O'Byrne with abhorrence. Yet he remembered that, benevolent as she was, she would have acted and looked the same, probably, whoever had been the object in danger.

After an inquiry concerning Clara's health and foot, Davenant exclaimed, "So, Miss Delancy, I find that Colonel O'Byrne's exertions in your favour the

other night were not the mere result of spontaneous humanity, but of a tenderer feeling."

"Nonsense!" replied Clara: "what has the foolish man been telling you?"

"No nonsense, but a serious truth to him, poor fellow! I breakfasted with him this morning, and he told me that the look of terror and aversion with which you regarded him has haunted him ever since; and that the greatest favour I could do him would be to give him an opportunity, by introducing him to my uncle, of obtaining from you one of your usual sweet and benevolent smiles.—May I venture to bring him?"

"Any friend of yours I shall be glad to see."

"But do you wish to see him only as a friend of mine? Are you not aware that at the Opera, at the Play, in the Drive, and wherever he could contrive to see you, Colonel O'Byrne has for a month

past gazed at you with as constant an observation as astronomers bestow on a favourite planet?"

"I must own that I have thought myself lately the object of his gaze:—but at first I concluded it was Eleanor, and I told her so."

"So you did," said Eleanor; "and I own that I thought so too, till he called yours the other night the sweetest face in the world."

"He only said what he thought, poor man!—and he is very ambitious of trying to make Miss Delancy think the same of his face, and of endeavouring to win the heart that beams in Miss Delancy's face. I told him I could not presume to determine how far he had any chance for success. But what says Miss Delancy herself?"

"She says," replied Clara with great emotion, "that as your friend and her friend she shall always be willing to see

and receive Colonel O'Byrne; but that he never, never can be more to her than a friend."

"But if Colonel O'Byrne asks me if there be any particular reason for your crushing his hopes—what am I to say?"

"Is it necessary to give a reason?"

"Suppose he should ask whether your affections are already engaged—what can I answer?"

"Tell him you do not know," she replied, turning very pale.

"But what if I wish to know, and presume to ask the question?—What if for reasons of *my own* I ask you, as a friend interested in your welfare, whether your affections are disengaged or not?"

Clara, confounded at this most unexpected address, got up, sat down, turned now pale now red, and was at first wholly unable to answer. Eleanor meanwhile was equally perturbed, though from different feelings; for she was aware that

such was Clara's diseased reverence (as she thought it) for truth, that she would answer "Yes," if she answered at all; and that if Davenant asked whether Lieutenant Beaumont were the object of her love, she would as decidedly answer "No:" she therefore feared that Davenant might, on hearing that negative, begin to suspect from her confusion that he himself was the beloved object. She accordingly thought it better to interfere; and had just begun to chide Davenant for putting such questions to such a truth-speaking person, when Clara found courage to reply, "Surely, sir, no one has a right to put such a question as yours to any woman: I therefore beg you to excuse my answering it; and in so doing, allow me to observe, that I believe I am only asserting the privileges of my sex."

"I am answered, madam," said Davenant bowing coldly and proudly; "and

have now no doubts remaining. You would have instantly said No, ingenuous as you are, if you could have done so with truth. But though the daughter of Mrs. Delancy does not choose to consider me as her friend, I hope to be able one day or other to convince her that I am such, and that my recent question was not dictated by idle curiosity."

Clara now endeavoured to answer him, but could not; and bursting into tears she hastily left the room.

"Ah! I see how it is! poor O'Byrne!" cried Davenant, "and happy Beaumont! for that is the name of the lieutenant, is it not?"

"It is," replied Eleanor, and changed the subject as fast as possible.

The next day, as Clara was desirous of air, though she was unable to take exercise, she accompanied Eleanor, Davenant, and her guardian in the open barouche to a florist's in the King's Road.

On their way they drove through Bond-street; and while their course was impeded for a few minutes by the throng of carriages, a young man, seeing Clara, came out of a shop near which they were detained, and begged leave to show her the sword which she had bespoken, as it was quite finished and ready to send according to order.

"A sword!—you order a sword, child! What can you want with a sword?" exclaimed her guardian to the conscious Clara, who was covered with blushes of the deepest confusion; while Davenant, though he had taught himself at last to believe all hope of Clara's being his was over, felt as much agitated as if he now suspected it for the first time.

Clara however soon recovered herself, and replied, "I certainly do not want a sword for myself, sir; but I want one as a gift for a military friend of mine, and I shall be glad to have your opinion of it."

"Oh, ho! I see how it is," said Morley, with a significant and pleased look at Eleanor; and he would have looked at Davenant, but his head was averted: for he really felt his mind relieved by the conviction which he now had, that what he had uttered, fancying it *might be a lie*, was in reality *a truth*.

The young man now exhibited the sword, which was so handsome in all respects as to deserve every possible commendation; and Eleanor with an arch smile observed, "Your military friend, Clara, will really be the envy of the regiment."

The young man now desired to know to whom and to what place the sword was to be sent: and Clara replied with more blushes,—for she was conscious of the interpretation to which her expensive gift had exposed her,—"It is to be sent to Lieutenant Beaumont, 54th regiment, Lynn Regis."

The carriage then drove on; and both Eleanor and Morley, feeling their spirits exhilarated by the unusual consciousness that they were in reality more honest than they had thought themselves, talked and laughed incessantly. But Clara was too oppressed by an unpleasant consciousness to speak; and Davenant, spite of his better judgement, felt displeased and jealous. Nor were these emotions unmixed with pique, though he knew he had no right to feel it; and he showed this feeling by carefully avoiding to look at or speak to Clara, and by seeming to be wholly engrossed by Eleanor's bewitching smiles, and to hang enamoured on her winning accents.

Clara saw and felt his neglect, and almost fancied that the sword had occasioned this marked change in his manner. "If so," thought she, "he loves me, and is jealous! and O that I had but resolution to declare that Beaumont ne-

ver will, never can, be more to me than he already is!"

But she could not prevail on herself to volunteer this assurance, and Davenant remained undeceived.

The next morning, as soon as Davenant came, Morley desired to see him in his own study: and when he entered, his uncle looked so grave and so distant, that Davenant asked whether he had offended him.

"Offended me! No: but you have vexed and disappointed me, I own."

"In what, sir?"

"Why, I fear you are trifling with the affections of a too susceptible girl, Sidney."

"Sir!"

"Yes;—I see very clearly that Eleanor loves you, and I think she has some reason to think you love her; and yet I find from her that you have not made her any serious proposals."

"Did you ask the question, sir?"

"I did; because on questioning Clara alone concerning your behaviour to Eleanor last night, she owned that during the drive home your behaviour to each other was so much that of lovers, that she concluded you meant to offer to Eleanor very soon."

"Miss Delancy said this?"

"Yes; therefore I really think it my duty, as Eleanor's guardian, to request that you will either desist from your attentions before the poor girl's peace is quite destroyed, or propose to her at once."

"What! before my mind is made up?"

"But your mind ought to be made up now one way or the other, Sidney."

"I own it—I own it—And does Miss Delancy think I ought to offer to her friend?"

"To be sure she does," boldly replied Morley, fancying Clara's opinion had

more weight with his nephew than his own.

"And perhaps she wishes me to offer to Eleanor?"

"No doubt she does."

"Did she tell you so?"

"Yes; I am, I am sure she did."

"Well, sir," said Davenant, "the die is now cast; and I hope by to-morrow I shall have quite resolved to offer to Eleanor—though I could have wished to have had more opportunities first of studying her character."

"Nonsense!" cried Morley; "do you not already know that she is a beauty, a great heiress, full of talents and accomplishments and graces, and that she loves you dearly?"

"The last I do not know;—but that knowledge, sir, will be, after all, the most decisive with me."

They then separated. And as Eleanor that day and the next thought proper to

look languid and depressed, before the day ended, Davenant had offered her his hand, and he left the house her accepted and declared lover.

I will not venture to assert that Clara slept much that night, nor that she did not repine at Eleanor's happiness; but it was not from selfish feelings only, and because she wished Davenant's choice had fallen on herself. She was influenced also by a benevolent fear, that, as Davenant was evidently an artless and ingenuous character, he would not be happy in an union with a woman whose habits were of a contrary nature. But his fate was now decided, and hers too she feared. Still she met the blow with that dignity of mind which belonged to the integrity of her character, and was firmly resolved to struggle with and to overcome a passion already hopeless, and which would soon become criminal.

Eleanor certainly did all she could to increase Clara's secret pain, by the ungenerous triumph which she expressed; for though she more than suspected that Clara's feelings towards Davenant were very nearly those of love, she made a parade of her own hopes, and of the tender devotion which her lover displayed towards her.

Clara thought this conduct very ungenerous; but she would have excused it, had she known that Eleanor's declaration of confidence in Davenant's devoted attachment was a false one; and that, as she was only too sure, if her guardian and herself had not taken care to impress on his mind a conviction that Clara was in love with Mr. Beaumont; his choice would never have fallen on her, *pique* and *jealousy* urged the vaunting manner, which, though it wounded Clara, proved that her happiness was not so secure as she declared it to be.

Clara's foot continued painful enough for a few days after the engagement of Davenant and Eleanor was known, to allow her to decline going out with them either on morning expeditions or to evening parties; and as she turned this enforced solitude to the best account, by fortifying her mind against the further indulgence of her feelings, she could not be said to be miserable, though she was very far from being happy. She was also supported by the consciousness, that no one but Eleanor suspected her attachment, and something whispered her that Eleanor would not reveal her weakness to Davenant.

Clara's foot was now considerably better; and she resolved to decline accompanying the lovers no longer. During her confinement, Morley had heard that no tidings had yet been received of the poor Harrisons; but that, though their credi-

tors had suspected them of a fraudulent bankruptcy, it was thought they were living in great poverty and obscurity somewhere in London. Clara, on hearing this, would have given a great reward to any one who could have discovered their abode; but she could not contrive any means of setting about such an inquiry.

One morning Clara consented to accompany Eleanor and her *chaperone*, attended by Davenant, to make cheap purchases at Flint's on Fish-street-hill. Eleanor and Clara being next the door when the carriage stopped, they were handed out by Davenant before their *chaperone*; and while Clara was looking round at the passing objects, as she was waiting till the old lady with them should have alighted, she saw a man shabbily dressed pass on the other side of the street with a very quick step, and was

convinced that she beheld the long-lost Mr. Harrison. She communicated her convictions to Eleanor, who was now following the old lady into the shop; and though Eleanor tried to detain her, she instantly, forgetting her recent lameness, ran down the street, keeping the supposed Mr. Harrison in sight, till she saw him disappear in a shop just round the corner.

Eleanor and Davenant now came up with her as she stopped to take breath, and Davenant chid her for forgetting her foot.

"How could I think of myself," cried she, "at such a moment!—But I must go into that shop after him."

"Pray do not," said Eleanor eagerly: "it would be cruelty, and not kindness, to force Mr. Harrison, if it be really he, to be seen against his will."

And Davenant, who had heard the misfortunes and disappearance of the Harri-

sons discussed, was inclined to Eleanor's opinion. However, as Clara was already in the shop, and Davenant followed her, Eleanor was forced to go too.

But there was no Mr. Harrison to be seen. Still, as Clara was sure that she had seen him enter, she entreated to know whether a gentleman of the name of Harrison did not lodge there: and after a little hesitation the shopman said that a person of the name of Harrison and his family did certainly occupy the apartments on their second floor, but that they never saw any one.

"O yes! I am sure they will see me," cried Clara; and she had scarcely added, "take up this card to them," when Mr. Harrison, unconscious what was going forward, came down stairs and re-entered the shop. He started at seeing Clara and Eleanor, and would have retreated: but Clara seized his arm; and bursting into

tears as she gazed on his indigent appearance, his pale cheek, and anxious countenance, she faltered out, "My dear Mr. Harrison, why have you so long and so cruelly hidden yourself from your friends?"

Eleanor too, but with embarrassment, now came forward and reproached him as Clara had done; while Clara begged to see his wife and family. Excessive emotion at first prevented Mr. Harrison from replying; but at length he said he would prepare his wife for the visit, and left them.

"Had I not better return to Flint's," said Davenant, "to the old lady?"

"Certainly, certainly," said Eleanor eagerly.

But Clara, who wished him to witness a scene which would, she thought, be the means of interesting him in her friends' favour, as she knew his power to serve them was great, requested him not to go

till Mr. Harrison came back. When he did, she presented Davenant to him, whom Mr. Harrison remembered when he was a boy; and she asked if he might not accompany them up-stairs.

"Certainly," said Harrison; "it is less painful to have strangers witness our change of fortune than friends:—but my poor wife wishes to see such dear friends as you and Miss Musgrave; and if what the papers tell us is true, Mr. Davenant has a right to follow Miss Musgrave any where."

Davenant smiled, Eleanor blushed, Clara sighed, and followed Harrison up the dark and narrow stairs, which led to a large, low, dark room looking into a court, where three fine girls were busily employed working muslin for a maintenance (as they afterwards learnt), and a fourth was copying music.

As soon as the poor girls saw Clara and Eleanor, they ran up to them, and hang-

ing fondly round them, wept out a welcome; while both their visitors were too much affected at the evidences of indigence and virtuous industry around them, to be able to speak:—nor was Davenant an unmoved spectator of the scene.

A door which led to an inner apartment now opened, and Mrs. Harrison appeared, leaning on the arm of her husband and walking with difficulty; while on her pale face and meagre person few traces remained of that excelling loveliness which had so long provoked the envy of Mrs. Somerville, and had been one of the causes of her present distress.

She received Clara and Eleanor with great affection, and declared they were the only friends of her better days whom she could bear to see, because she was sure that they had no pleasure in wit-

nessing a scene like the present; and if Mr. Davenant was worthy (and she did not doubt but he was) the hand of Eleanor Musgrave, she knew he would commiserate as strongly as they did, what she might call undeserved obloquy and misfortune.

Mrs. Harrison was now placed on a couch by her affectionate husband; and as she lay there supported by pillows, her visitors sat near her, in order that they might hear what she said, as her illness had rendered her voice faint; and her husband seated himself on the couch by her.

"My dear friend," said Clara, "I was not prepared to see you so very ill—but you are better, I hope?"

"Yes; for since my girls and their father have procured employment I am happier; and as medicine and attendance are very expensive things, you know, I

cannot afford to be ill; and if I get well, I can perhaps earn money too."

"Oh! my dear young friends," cried Harrison, "there is the pang, the greatest pang of all—to see that woman, rich, well-born, and accustomed to luxuries, now in this miserable unhealthy place, and talking of working for her bread!"

"It must not be—it shall not be," cried Clara and Eleanor at once, and Davenant turned away.

"It must be, or we must submit to owe pecuniary obligation; and my pride is not yet sunk so low," said Mrs. Harrison.

At this moment a fine boy of about three years old ran up stairs, and bounded into the room, saying, "Mamma, Papa, don't you know it is my birth-day, and that I always used to have a plum-pudding for my dinner? but Mary says she can't make one now."

This artless remonstrance occasioned

a silence of a minute or two. At length Mr. Harrison, seating the little pleader on his knee, said in a hoarse voice, "My dear James, we never mean to keep birth-days in our family again; but Mary may buy you two penny-worth of raisins, as you are a good child and it *is* your birth-day:" and the delighted child, after struggling to get from Clara who wanted to kiss him, because he was so eager to procure the plums, ran out of the room in a transport of infantine joy.

"No no," said Mr. Harrison, "poor child! thy parents have had enough of keeping birth-days.—I suppose you know, young ladies, that our present misfortunes are wholly owing to that little dance we gave to celebrate the return of our son Richard, on his birth-day?"

"No, indeed we did not," said Clara with great emotion, casting a side look at Eleanor, who turned excessively pale.

"Yes, some one was so cruel as to go and tell the Somervilles—No, to tell Mrs. Somerville, that we had fine company, fine music, fine wines,—such as Champaigne, and, I believe, Burgundy; pines, grapes; in short—such a suppper as even in our best days we could not have purchased, and which was, *you know*, entirely made up of the remnants of presents given us by our friends. This made Mr. Somerville conclude I had made a secret purse and a fraudulent bankruptcy: therefore, when I had the prospect of getting into a lucrative trade, he refused to sign my certificate, and even persuaded my other creditors, formerly my well wishers, to believe with him, that I was a dishonest man, nay I might say a villain. Being thus deprived of reputation, I could not bear to remain where I fancied every eye I met reproached me; and we removed to London, resolving to hide ourselves from every one: while the remittances which

my eldest son in India had sent me were all expended very soon, in trying to restore that dear sufferer, whose health sunk under the consciousness of disgrace, though she knew it to be unmerited; and at length we were forced to remove hither."

"But why," cried Clara, "did you not apply to us to clear your aspersed fame to Mr. Somerville?"

"You were in London, and he refused even to see or hear from me."

"But he is in London now, and we will go to him directly," said Eleanor rising, trembling in every limb.

"It is too late now," said Mr. Harrison; "the business is disposed of."

"But another business may be procured," cried Davenant; "nay, it *shall* be procured." And the sanguine Clara already saw what she wished accomplished.

"You are very good," said the husband

and wife; and the latter added, "But Mr. Somerville is an impracticable man —or rather his wife is an impracticable woman: and I do not know why exactly, but she always seemed to hate me, yet I never gave her any offence."

"Yes, you did—the greatest offence possible," cried Eleanor: "you were far more beautiful, more amiable, and more admired than herself; and though not richer than she was, you lived in a more elegant style and kept better company."

"I wish she could see me now," meekly replied Mrs. Harrison glancing her faded eyes first on herself and then round the room, "and I think her malice towards me would be soon at an end."

Eleanor started from her seat, and turning to the window sobbed audibly; while Davenant, pleased with emotion which he attributed to genuine sensibility, tenderly tried to soothe her irritated

feelings, by whispering promises to be a friend to Mr. Harrison.

"But can you cure her evident disease?—can you restore her to what she was before?" Here her sobs redoubled.

"O dear Eleanor!" said Mr. Harrison, "would such hearts as yours were more common! But indeed we were shocked and surprised to find we had a secret foe;—for who, but some one who hated us, could have told Mrs. Somerville such lies concerning our party? and we thought, except Mrs. Somerville, we had not an enemy in the world."

Clara now looked earnestly at Eleanor, and saw her bosom heave convulsively.

"By the bye," continued Mrs. Harrison, "some one assured us it was you, or Miss Delancy, Eleanor, who gave Mr. Somerville such a false and fatal description of our entertainment. But I knew

it could not be, and I was quite angry at any one's daring to accuse you."

Eleanor's good feelings were now forcibly awakened by the voice of compunction, and giving way to their dictates she precipitated herself at the feet of Mrs. Harrison; and seizing her hand exclaimed, "But it *was* I who did you this injury:—yet not as an enemy, but a friend: I did it to tease your known enemy Mrs. Somerville,—and you know the rest. But I shall never forgive myself as long as I live!"

Surprise, consternation and sorrow, now kept every one silent but Clara, who eagerly assured Mrs. Harrison that Eleanor had injured her most unconsciously, and that she deeply lamented that Mrs. Harrison had not instantly informed Eleanor of the charge, as by that means all would have been cleared up.

"But how could I bear to wound her feelings by telling her of so severe an

accusation against her, which I did not believe she deserved? But rise, Miss Musgrave, pray do—I forgive you."

"But I shall never forgive myself," said Eleanor as she rose.

While a sort of uncomfortable silence had now stolen over the whole family of Harrison, which Eleanor eagerly broke by repeated solicitations to drive directly to Mr. Somerville's, Davenant told Mr. Harrison that he had a particular and great favour to beg of him; which was, that he would set off immediately, for him, to his estate in Surrey. "I understand, sir," said he, "that you were bred to the law, but relinquished it for a very lucrative trade. You are therefore, as a quondam lawyer, and a man of business, the very person I want. I find my late uncle had a dishonest steward, and I want some one to go and see if he cannot be made to disgorge some of his ill-gotten wealth: —but, sir, you must not delay a day." And

the gratified Harrison, really deceived by Davenant's manner into believing that he wanted his assistance, and preferred him on the occasion from a conviction of his integrity, eagerly expressed his willingness to set off directly; while Eleanor and Clara, who suspected Davenant's motive, found it difficult to suppress the tears of pleasure and approbation.

"Now, sir," said Davenant, "let me speak to you below stairs;" and when they returned, Harrison said he was going to take a place in the coach and get his best suit out of pawn: in the meanwhile he begged his girls to pack him up some linen, &c.

"You may think me a poor foolish woman," cried his agitated wife; "but the idea that I shall see you, Alfred, look like a gentleman again is very delightful to me!" while Harrison, pressing Davenant's hand, nodded adieu to the rest,

for he could not speak, and ran down stairs.

In a few minutes more, (and while Davenant was assuring Mrs. Harrison that his pride would not allow him to suffer the wife and children of his agent, as he was now proud to call Mr. Harrison, to remain in such lodgings as these,) the little boy burst into the room, saying, "Papa had sent in a great big piece of cold plum pudding, which was to be fried for dinner."

"Parents are weak fond creatures, you see," cried Mrs. Harrison, smiling through tears; "but I see, sir, that my husband considers this as a day of rejoicing, owing to your kindness;—and especially as, through your means, young ladies, we hope to be restored to our good name."

"I shall not know a moment's peace till I have convinced Mr. Somerville," said Eleanor; "and this terrible lesson

will not, I trust, be lost on me in future life."

"Amen," said Davenant solemnly; and Eleanor felt rebuked and ashamed.

Davenant now told Mrs. Harrison that, as her guardian till her husband returned, he should insist on finding healthier and better lodgings for her, and should go in search of them immediately.

Mrs. Harrison, who was now quite overcome with all that had passed, was really too weary to object, even if she had had the inclination: and gracefully begging Davenant to believe she was sensible as she ought to be of his delicate attentions, she pressed Clara's hand, kissed Eleanor, who threw herself sobbing on her neck, and then desired her eldest daughter to lead her to her chamber.

Clara and Eleanor then followed Davenant, who had gone to call up the carriage; and after they were seated, they drove to Flint's, to take up their wonder-

ing and half-angry companion. They then, as they were not far from Clapham, drove thither over London-bridge, by Davenant's desire, in search of lodgings; and having found very convenient ones on the edge of Clapham-common, which could be entered that evening, they re-entered London over Westminster-bridge, and drove to the house of Mr. Somerville. They luckily found him at home: and Clara, not without tears, described her successful effort to follow Mr. Harrison, and the whole scene of his poverty and his distress. She then described the agony of Eleanor, at finding that his misery and his injured fame proceeded from her false statement to Mrs. Somerville. Here Eleanor, the self-judged Eleanor, took up the narrative; and, with all the eloquence of compunction and of truth, confessed even her *motives* for the statement which she gave; and earnestly conjured Mr. Somerville, if he still believed Mr.

Harrison a fraudulent bankrupt, to go and visit him at his lodgings in the city.

Mr. Somerville, who was really a good-natured man, could not resist the evidence now brought before him; and he expressed his sorrow for having been made the instrument of such suffering to a man whom he had once so highly esteemed.

"Then, sir," cried Davenant, "I trust that you will instantly set about signing the certificate yourself, and convincing the other creditors of this injured man's entire innocence;—and if necessary I will draw up a paper of the whole for these ladies to sign."

"I trust it is not necessary, sir," said Mr. Somerville. And the visitors departed, leaving Mr. Somerville rather perplexed to know how his wife would relish the communication which he had to make to her, when she returned from her

drive in the Park. But when he gave her a detail of Mrs. Harrison's ill looks and altered person, and described minutely her excessive indigence, and the complete humiliation which her pride and that of her husband had received, she looked and spoke most graciously; and quite approved her husband's going instantly to the creditors, that "the poor man Harrison" might be enabled to get an honest livelihood some way or other as soon as possible.

But the benevolent being who was become deeply interested in the fate of the Harrisons, and the more so because his affianced wife had occasioned their sufferings, did not intend that "the poor man Harrison" should get an "honest livelihood" in any way but the best possible: and having learnt in what house he had been offered a share of the business, he went to the principal partner, who, from a knowledge of Harrison's

abilities and integrity, had offered him the share; and he found, as he expected, that that share was disposed of; but finding also that a much more considerable share was still to be obtained, he resolved to purchase it for Mr. Harrison,—and to be paid five per cent. for the money so advanced. Then with a lightened heart Davenant rejoined Clara and Eleanor, having hired a glass coach, in which, after a hasty dinner at five, he desired them to call on the Harrisons, and convey them to their lodgings—giving Mrs. Harrison a certain sum as part of the salary in advance which he had settled on her husband as his agent.

The commission was a delightful one, though the delight had to poor Eleanor considerable drawbacks; but Clara's eyes were brilliant with benevolent pleasure. Clara's brow was unconscious of any cloud which conscious error had gathered

there: and while Davenant looked at her, he again thought the poor lieutenant was a very rich and enviable man.

I shall only add on this subject, that Mrs. Harrison suffered herself and children to be removed to the country lodging; and that her health was so much restored by the country air, by better food, and by recovered peace of mind, that when Mr. Harrison returned to town at the end of a fortnight, in consequence of a letter from Davenant, the affectionate husband shed tears of joy and thankfulness, as he held his once more smiling wife to his heart. The business on which Davenant sent for him raised his happiness to its climax: and in a few weeks he was one of the principal partners in a long-established and safe house in the metropolis; and his wife and children were restored to their situation in society.

Preparations were now making for the marriage of Davenant and Eleanor; when the former was forced to go into Surrey on business, as he really had employed a very acute lawyer, though he was not yet gone down, to transact for him the business on which, merely as an excuse for giving him money, he had employed Mr. Harrison. To Surrey therefore he went, meaning to stay a few days at his estate.

He had not been gone long, when he wrote to Eleanor, and informed her that he was unexpectedly obliged to hasten to another part of the country, to see an old friend whom he had known in India, as that friend was, he found, involved in a law-suit, and wanted to see him; and that this unfortunate circumstance would detain him longer away from London.

Two days after, Eleanor was informed that a gentleman wished to see her; and

as soon as she entered the room, the said gentleman put a paper and a guinea in her hand, told her he came from Mr. Darby, Sir Richard Mildred's solicitor, and vanished before Eleanor could recover her presence of mind. On opening the paper, she found that it was a subpœna to appear as Sir Richard Mildred's witness, at a trial for defamation, in which George Bellamy, gentleman, was plaintiff, and Sir Richard Mildred, baronet, defendant. Eleanor nearly fainted at this terrible summons;—and Clara and Morley, who now entered the room, were startled at her excessive paleness and agitation: but Clara was at no loss to account for it, when she read the paper which Eleanor gave her. It was now Eleanor's painful task to explain the whole business to her guardian, conjuring him to save her, if he could, from appearing in a court of justice; which she thought

might be prevented if Sir Richard was informed that she must on oath unsay the strongest part of what she had advanced, and therefore must injure rather than serve his cause.

"Have you then been so base," cried Morley, "as to say, and thereby injure an innocent man, what you cannot swear? I blush for you, and have a mind to leave you to the public disgrace which you merit."

Clara could have said, "She merits not disgrace, according to your own principles, sir: for you know you always say *there is no harm in a little white lying;* and you saw no harm in Eleanor's lies to Mrs. Somerville."

"You forget, sir, I did not mean to injure Mr. Bellamy," replied Eleanor in a faltering voice.

"No, nor Mrs. Harrison," observed Clara; "and yet you see what unexpected

mischief may attend *any* deviation from truth."

"There! don't preach, Clara," cried Morley; "but let us see what is to be done in this bad business."

At this moment a letter was brought to Mr. Morley, from Sir Richard Mildred, stating that, on finding Mr. Bellamy was candidate for the place of master to a free-school at ——— in Surrey, he had thought it his duty to write to those in whose hands the appointment to it was vested, to say "that Mr. Bellamy, though a man of letters and learning, was not a fit person to be intrusted with such a charge, as he had treated a son of his cruelly, and inflicted on him such corporal punishment as no master ought to inflict for any crime whatever; *he having actually dragged him by the hair of the head into the middle of the room; and that the hair had*

been literally torn off in more places than one."

In consequence of this letter—a libel as the law called it (it having been written and circulated)—Mr. Bellamy was refused the appointment; and had therefore brought an action for damages against Sir Richard, who was consequently obliged to summon Miss Musgrave as his witness; and he concluded the subpœna would be served that day, as the assizes would commence the day after the next, at Guildford, the county town.

"Well, this will be no agreeable surprise to my poor nephew, Miss Musgrave," observed Morley.

"O sir! must he know it?" cried Eleanor.

"How can it be concealed, if you appear in a court?"

In bitter regrets on Eleanor's side, in very severe animadversions on her guardian's, and in fruitless attempts

from Clara to console Eleanor and pacify Morley, while she urged their setting off immediately in search of Sir Richard, whose letter was dated "Guildford," the day passed.

The next day brought a still more perplexing letter to Eleanor, from Davenant; in which he informed her that the friend whom he had known in India was a friend of hers, Mr. Bellamy; and that on his arrival at his house he found him in a difficult situation out of which he had fortunately remembered it was in her power to deliver him, as she was, he had since recollected, a witness of the whole of the alleged assault on Master Mildred: and as he hoped, by a private examination of witnesses, and by referring the business to arbitration, to prevent the matter from coming to a law-suit, Mr. Bellamy earnestly requested her to set off with her guardian and friend for Guildford; that by bearing her testimony

in his defence she might convince Sir Richard of his error, and induce him to retract the charge that had prevented his election; which, however, he trusted would still take place, if the accusation against him was gotten rid of.

"Well," said Morley, "you are really, Miss Eleanor, like the bat in the fable now; and have the singular, and I must say dishonourable distinction of being subpœnaed on both sides, as a friend to be relied on! O my poor high-souled nephew! what will he feel when he hears this! But come, let us order horses, and set off for Guildford." And Eleanor, overwhelmed with a variety of painful feelings, found herself very soon on the road to Surrey.

The journey was not made more pleasant to her by the observations which occasionally escaped her guardian, who could not help owning that he thought

the present a much worse business than that of Harrison's, and that he feared his nephew would *never get over it.* Eleanor *wished* to be able to say, "Then let him break with me and welcome!" But a sense of conscious degradation kept down her pride of heart, and she remained silent and unhappy.

Clara meanwhile was not equally unhappy, but she was equally silent. She too thought that Davenant would be shocked at this new proof of Eleanor's laxity of principle as it appeared to her; and she felt that he had an opportunity of breaking, if he wished it, an engagement which, she was sure, would be to him the source of future unhappiness: and disinterestedly even, without any view to herself, Clara could not grieve at the probable result of this affair, especially as she was convinced Eleanor did not love Davenant; and she even sus-

pected that, if she loved any one, it was a Captain Lethbridge, a lieutenant in the guards.

When they reached Guildford, Morley inquired at the first inn to which they drove, whether Sir Richard Mildred was there, and they found that he was: and while Eleanor, nearly fainting, threw herself on Clara's shoulder, Morley alighted and went into the house. He soon came back, to say that he found Mr. Bellamy with his friends and lawyers, and Sir Richard with his, were then met to settle matters amicably if possible, and prevent the business from going into a court of justice; that they were only just assembled, and that Eleanor could not have arrived at a more fortunate moment.

"But who," thought Eleanor, "are Mr. Bellamy's friends? Surely Davenant is one of them." And her knees trembled under her so much, that she

could scarcely walk, though supported by Clara.

As Morley expected, when he desired to be shown into Sir Richard's apartment, he was told that he was engaged, and could not be spoken with. But having desired the waiter to say that Mr. Morley and Miss Musgrave were waiting for admission, they heard Sir Richard and Mr. Bellamy both exclaim, "Miss Musgrave! How fortunate!" in a tone of joy; for each thought that her evidence would be favourable to him and his cause; and this consciousness did not render Eleanor's trembling limbs more steady as she entered the room.

As soon as Davenant saw her he ran to meet her; and observing her excessive paleness and agitation, he tenderly said in a low voice, "Dear girl, how kind it was in you to come so soon! But why this emotion? Remember, you are not

in a court of justice, but amongst friends." And as he drew her arm under his, while Clara supported her on the other side, he said within himself, "I did not think she had had so much shrinking delicacy of feeling."

Sir Richard rose on Eleanor's entrance, and *for him*, made her a most gracious bow. But Bellamy eagerly took her hand and said, "Thanks, dear Miss Musgrave; now *you* are come all will go well with me."

"Now, Mr. Lennox," said Sir Richard pompously to his counsel, "now, sir, you will hear my complete justification; as this young lady, and a most respectable young lady, is my sole and sufficient witness."

"*Your* witness!" cried Bellamy; "she is *mine*, sir: *I* sent for her, sir."

"And I *subpœnaed* her, sir," said Sir Richard in a thundering voice, while Bellamy looked at Eleanor with surprise and

suspicion; and Davenant whispered her "That man is certainly mad;—what does he mean?"

"But, sir, I have the honour to call Miss Musgrave my friend," cried Bellamy; "and as she witnessed all that passed at the moment of the pretended assault, I requested her to come hither—and here she is."

"Mr. Bellamy," said Sir Richard, "I must still repeat my assurance, that though you might *send* for Miss Musgrave, I *subpœnaed* her. Answer, madam, did I not?"

"You did, sir," she replied in a voice scarcely audible from emotion.

"You hear," observed Sir Richard: "Now then put a few questions to the lady, Mr. Lennox:" and Davenant, involuntarily withdrawing his arm from Eleanor's, whose confusion now seemed to him to look more like shame than modesty, awaited what was to follow in painful alarm.

To his first questions, such as Was she with Lady Sophia at Mr. Bellamy's on such a day? and so on, she answered in the affirmative; but when he asked her whether she did not see Mr. Bellamy drag Master Mildred by the hair of the head into the middle of the room, she replied in an audible voice, and in an impressive manner, "No, I DID NOT."

"You did not!" vociferated Sir Richard: "Recollect yourself, madam, and do not force me to regret that we are not in court, and that you are not examined on your oath, madam."

"You are severe, sir," cried Davenant; "I shall not allow this lady to be insulted."

"Well then, madam," observed Mr. Lennox, "if you did *not* see that, what *did* you see?"

"Through the window I saw Mr. Bellamy drag Master Mildred into the middle of the room."

"Aye, through the window only; therefore it might still be by the hair of the head."

"I hope I may be allowed to say, sir, that the window being quite open, I could see as well as if I had been in the room, and Mr. Bellamy did not *touch* Master Mildred's head."

"But did you not, madam," said Sir Richard, "tell me a different story?"

"I confirmed a different story by my 'Yes,' and I own it to my shame."

"And, madam, did you not say you saw marks of hair having been torn off, on Master Mildred's head; and the mark of fingers on his cheek?"

"Yes, sir."

"And did not Augustus say that Mr. Bellamy had done it?—and did not you believe him?"

"No; nor did I ever say that I believed him. I believed then, and I do now, that the hair was torn off and the

blow given by a little boy whom Mr. Bellamy also dragged by the arm into the middle of the room, whose ear was then bleeding from a bite which Master Mildred had given him."

"And pray, madam," said Sir Richard, "if I am to believe that you are speaking the truth now, what was your motive for telling me a falsehood? You know it was from my reliance on your integrity that I took my son from that admirable master, in whom I had before such confidence; and I think, madam, the injured Mr. Bellamy called you *his friend*."

"He did me, I own, more honour than I deserve, sir," replied Eleanor, bursting into tears; "but I was then and am now his most sincere friend, and never thought that I should seem or be his enemy."

"Explain, madam."

"Sir, Lady Sophia with many tears and entreaties conjured me to say as she

said, and to confirm her declaration that she saw Mr. Bellamy drag her son into the middle of the room by the hair of his head, as she declared that it would kill her to have her son go back to that school; and she knew, sir, you would not believe her unless I confirmed what she asserted: therefore, sir, as Mr. Bellamy told her she would do him a favour by taking her son away, I thought I was obliging, not hurting my respected friend, by saying 'Yes,' when I ought in conscience, I own, to have said 'No.'"

"So then," whispered Morley to Davenant, "it was only a *white lie* at *last;* no malice in it."

"Only a white lie!" murmured out Davenant with a deep sigh.

"And what you have now said, madam, you are willing to confirm on oath, are you?"

"I am: nay I implore, sir, to be put on my oath."

"Be it so then, madam; I am a magistrate, and can receive it."

Davenant and Morley were now each going angrily to interfere, when Clara pressed forward and begged to be heard. "Let me observe, Sir Richard," she said, "that you must know little of human nature, if you do not see that my poor friend's present assertions bear all the marks of genuine truth, and also of genuine compunction, for having been led, through kind but mistaken compliance with Lady Sophia's maternal fondness, to confirm a lie put as it were into her mouth, and one of which she could not foresee the painful consequences. Under these circumstances, sir, allow me to say, that accepting the oath which Miss Musgrave, in humble and affecting contrition of spirit, has offered to take, would be an insult, sir, to her feelings and character, which both as a man and a gentleman you ought not to offer, and which I think

too highly of you to believe you capable of persisting in."

A murmur of approbation now ran round the room; and Eleanor hid her face, bathed in grateful tears, on Clara's shoulder; while Sir Richard himself seemed awed by "the grave rebuke severe in youthful beauty."

"Well, madam, well," he replied, "I will not press an oath on Miss Musgrave; but I wish now I had attended more to what you said."

"What did I say, sir?"

"When I told you this unpleasant affair, on which your conscious friend had been silent to you, you doubted the truth of what you heard; and when Lady Sophia exclaimed, 'Can I doubt the evidence of my senses?' you replied, 'Perhaps not; but in such a case I should doubt the evidence of mine.' And then you spoke warmly in praise of Mr. Bellamy; but not more, I am now convinced,

than he deserved.—Well, gentlemen," continued Sir Richard, "I believe you will agree with me that there is now only one thing for me to do, and that is, to ask Mr. Bellamy's forgiveness, thus, for the injury which I have done him without any malignant intention, but simply from a mistaken sense of duty; and to offer not only to wait personally on each gentleman in whom the appointment of the master of the school is vested, and assure him that Mr. Bellamy is wholly innocent of the charge I brought against him, and that in all respects he is most deserving of trust—but to make any public apology that Mr. Bellamy may desire. For I have, gentlemen," added he, "deserved humiliation, if this be humiliation, for having had the weakness to act once against my strongest convictions, and to place confidence and trust in that frail being called woman:—for, whether from frivolity, malignity, fear, or original

weakness of mind, women are usually false, hollow-hearted, and *mendacious*."

"My dear sir," said Mr. Bellamy, kindly tendering him his hand, "all I require of you is to speak to the gentlemen in question; for, as I found your testimony *against* me so powerful and so pernicious, I am sure that your testimony *in my favour* will be equally as effective and serviceable. And now let all past unpleasantness be forgotten; though I am much inclined to throw down the gauntlet to you still, in behalf of that sex which you have so cruelly aspersed." To err, is the tendency of us all: but to repent and make amends for past error gracefully and honourably, is the province only of a few. And I must say that my young friend here, has by her recent conduct wiped away from my mind all traces of her offence."

This well-meant speech was too much for the harassed feelings of Eleanor, who

was now forced to be carried up stairs in a strong hysteric, much to the relief of Sir Richard, who was thus saved the necessity of replying; as he did not see, nor indeed did Davenant, any merit in Eleanor's having spoken the truth, when infamy and perjury were the frightful alternative.

What Davenant's feelings were I will not pretend to describe; for all Eleanor's beauty, graces and attractions were lost to him, in his consciousness of her utter disregard of habitual truth. Indeed, such was his mental conflict, that he resolved not to see Eleanor again till he was more master of himself. He therefore, as soon as he heard that she was better, told Bellamy he must return to his own house directly.

For this sudden departure he had also another reason: he dared not trust himself to hear the praises of Clara's

spirited and generous defence of Eleanor. He dared not listen to commendation of Clara, from such a man as Bellamy, who loved he found to talk of her at a moment when his feelings were so roused against Eleanor. And spite of his friend's entreaties, that he would at least stay to dine with him to meet Sir Richard, he wrote a hurried note to his uncle and left the town.

As Eleanor expected this, she was not much affected by it; and her journey back to London, supported as she was by the kind approbation of her guardian and of Clara, was much pleasanter than her journey to Guildford.

The next day and the day after passed away without one line from Davenant. Another and another succeeded, and still he neither came nor wrote. Eleanor therefore resolved to write to him: but her courage failed her; and she eagerly and

earnestly conjured Clara to plead her cause with her alienated lover, as she had reason to think him.

Clara declined the office, feeling as she did so for the degradation of Eleanor. But at length, finding that Eleanor was distressed by some well-founded fears, perhaps, that Davenant attributed her resolve to speak the truth more to his presence, and to his interference in Bellamy's favour, than to any other motive, she consented to write to him; and her letter ran thus:—

"Your absence and your silence, dear sir, are at this moment particularly wounding to one who is a severe sufferer from the trial that she has lately undergone, and under which I must say that she acquitted herself well.

"Her agony was great when she received the subpœna and believed herself likely to appear in a court of justice, to deny upon oath what she had been led to

assent to in the weak and careless kindness of a hurried moment. But when she received your letter, and found you were not only to be acquainted with, but to witness, her humiliation, I thought we should scarcely have been able to get her to Guildford composed enough to go through the task required of her.

"And you, by neither *writing* nor *coming*, seem to realise, unhappy girl! the worst of her fears.

"I have only to add, that if the *fear* of *displeasing* you has such power over her health and her spirits, what may not the *wish* to *please* you, have over her future conduct?

"I am, dear sir,

"Yours most sincerely,

"Clara Delancy."

When Clara had finished this letter, she feared that she had said too much; but when she looked at the wretched

Eleanor, she thought she had hardly said enough; and her guardian thought so too: he therefore wrote thus himself;—

"Dear nephew,

"If you neither write nor come in a day or two, the poor Eleanor will have a typhus; she neither eats, drinks, nor sleeps, and looks like a ghost,—and I am not sure she has not one already. You are very hard on a *little white lie,* spoken to serve one friend and not meant to injure another.

"I am

"Your affectionate but distressed uncle,

"R. MORLEY."

Clara's letter did, indeed, bring Davenant to London, but not his uncle's; as he did not believe that distress of mind *infallibly* ended in a typhus (as his uncle called it). But *she* had said all that could be said for Eleanor; and

he came the more readily, because he saw that she was so *ready* to say it—so *evidently desirous*, he thought, that *he should marry Eleanor*. Little was he conscious of Clara's magnanimity!

Well, he came. His vanity and his better feelings were gratified to see how his absence and silence had depressed and altered Eleanor; and how soon she recovered her looks and her spirits when he spoke affectionately to her, and told her he trusted that her late painful experience would be a warning to her through life.

"That, and your example," replied Eleanor.

And Davenant, pleased with her humility, resolved to forget every thing but her beauty and her tenderness.

He did seem to remember these alone, and preparations for the marriage went on as usual: still Clara saw a note to Eleanor in the hand-writing of Captain

Lethbridge, and saw one lying on the hall table to him, in Eleanor's handwriting, where the footman who was to take it had laid it while he was drawing on his gloves.

"This is very strange, and, I think, wrong," thought Clara; but she did not mention the circumstance to Eleanor.

One night when they had a box at the Opera, and Mr. Morley said he was too unwell to go, Eleanor, complaining of head-ache, declared her wish to stay at home, to amuse her guardian; and spite of her lover's entreaties, she persisted in her resolution: but as the opera was a favourite one of his, she insisted on Davenant's going; and a *chaperone* for Clara being easily procured, Davenant, Clara and another lady drove to the Opera.

They had not been there above half an hour when some one knocked at the door of the box; and on Davenant's opening it,

Clara saw that it was Captain Lethbridge. He looked perturbed; and noticing no one but Clara, he came up to her and said, "Where is Eleanor?".

"My guardian is unwell; and as she has a head-ach she chose to stay at home with him."

"Indeed," said he in a low voice, "indeed! Kind soul! But are you sure that is her real reason for staying at home?"

"She said so."

"*I* believe it was fear of *me*."

"You know best what cause she has."

"But I will soon know the truth," he replied. So saying, he left the box, throwing the door after him with violence as he went out.

"Who is that rude and violent man?" said Davenant.

"A Captain Lethbridge, a rejected lover of Eleanor's," replied Clara; "therefore his oddity is excusable."

"Certainly; but it did require some apology."

Nothing unusual else passed that evening, and the party left the house before the last ballet ended, that Morley might not be disturbed by their late arrival. Davenant too, at Clara's desire, did not come in, as she concluded Morley and Eleanor were gone to bed; but she found them up, and playing piquet.

"Well, sir," said Clara, "I conclude you are better, by seeing you up, and so employed? No doubt your agreeable companion has done you good?"

"Yes, since she came to me I have been better; but she was so long with her mantua-maker that I have seen very little of her."

Clara now looked at Eleanor; and seeing her blush deeply, she was convinced that she had not been with her mantua-maker, but with Captain Lethbridge, whom probably she had staid at home to avoid, and

who had come to the house and insisted on seeing her: and a number of vague fears took possession of her mind. Morley now challenged her to a game of piquet; and Eleanor, afraid that Clara suspected the truth, stole away to bed to avoid interrogatories.

As Eleanor did not accompany her lover and Clara to the Opera, on the Saturday, and as a new and very fine opera was to be played on the Tuesday following, Eleanor was desirous of going. Davenant was unable to procure a good box; but as the ladies were above the little pride of not enduring to sit in the pit, Clara and Eleanor, accompanied by Davenant, a married lady, and Colonel O'Byrne, went early, and got excellent places in the sixth row of the pit. The party all sat in the same row; Davenant at the end next Fop's Alley, Eleanor next him, then the chaperone, then Clara, and then Colonel

O'Byrne; who had raised himself not a little in Clara's good opinion, by the relation he had given her of Davenant's conduct to his brother in India, and by the graceful and affecting manner in which he delivered it.

Nothing worth narrating occurred during the first act, or first ballet; but at the beginning of the second, his cheek flushed with wine, and a sort of saucy despair in his manner, Charles Fielding forced his way through a crowd of young men, and took a vacant seat behind Eleanor. Clara did not see him, as she was wholly absorbed in listening to the music.

"How are you, Miss Musgrave?" said he, "have you waltzed lately? Oh, no, I forgot, you never waltz. I waltz, sir! I never waltzed in my life!" mimicking Eleanor, whose alarmed looks now caught the attention of Davenant, as he turned round from speaking to a gentleman. And Davenant immediately recognised Field-

ing; and seeing him speaking in her ear, he remembered what she had said of him, and was resolved to prevent his further annoyance of her, even though he might be mad for the time being, and therefore excusable.

"I hate lying, it is such a mean vice," said he; "do not you hate it, Miss Musgrave?"

"I do; and impertinence also."

"What! dare you say this to me?" cried Fielding, but in a subdued voice, and grasping her arm,—"to me! to whom you were forced to confide the reasons of your mean falsehood? to me! the confidant of your petty disingenuousness? I tell you, Eleanor Musgrave, I would not marry you if you would offer me your lovely self and large fortune; for though you are as handsome as an angel, you lie like a chamber-maid." He spoke these last words so loud that Davenant heard them;

and leaning down, he whispered in his ear that he wished to speak to him in the lobby.

"Sir!" replied Fielding, surveying him with a look of pity.

Davenant rose soon after, and said he must go and speak to a gentleman; and Eleanor, who had not heard the whisper, was relieved by his leaving her. But when she saw Fielding rise also, and saw Davenant take his arm when Fielding reached the passage next the orchestra, and walk away with him, the truth burst upon her mind at once; and conjuring the chaperone to change seats with her, she told Clara all she had seen, and all she feared. Clara was equally alarmed with herself, and entreated Colonel O'Byrne to follow and see what was really passing; and he instantly obeyed her. Poor Clara was little conscious that she had sent on her errand the very man Davenant most wished to see.

When they reached the lobby, Davenant coolly but firmly said that he had a right, as he was soon to be the legal protector of Miss Musgrave, to insist that Fielding would never again presume to address Miss Musgrave in language so false and injurious to her.

"False! false! Mr. Davenant—Charles Fielding utter any thing that is false!"

"If you allude, sir, to Miss Musgrave's refusal to waltz with you, I must tell you, sir, that she declares she never did waltz in her life; and therefore you deceive yourself when you think she told you a falsehood, and refused merely because she would not waltz with *you*."

"I suppose, sir, she would say I am also mistaken, when I assert that she came to me after you left her, and apologized for the lie that she had told me;—nevertheless I do assert it."

"'Tis false, sir; she could not do such a thing: and you are saying this in re-

venge for her refusing to dance with you," cried Davenant, wholly thrown off his guard.

"False, sir! Do you accuse me not only of lying, sir, but of lying for the mean purpose of revenge?—Then it is *my* turn to demand satisfaction."

"And you shall have it, sir: though I must say, that the man who can sport in any way with the good name of a lady is scarcely worthy to meet an honourable man in the field."

"Sir! Mr. Davenant! you presume on your wealth, sir, because you know that I am poor: but to-morrow, sir, your boasted riches may avail you nothing."

"Nothing, indeed!" cried Davenant: "but I deny your charge."

"Well, sir, name the time and place."

"To-morrow, near the Serpentine river, at six o'clock in the morning."

"Be it so." At this moment O'Byrne joined them.

"You are the man I wished to see," cried Davenant.

"And I came in search of you; sent by the dear frightened young ladies."

"Pshaw! How unlucky that they should suspect any thing!"

Davenant then told O'Byrne what had passed, and asked him to be his second. And O'Byrne complied; being convinced, as a gallant man, that a duel must be *fixed* to take place, whether it did take place or not. And Fielding, seeing a gentleman of his aquaintance, requested the same favour of him.

"But now," said O'Byrne, "how shall we contrive to blind the ladies?"

"Let us—Mr. Davenant and myself I mean," said Fielding, "enter the pit arm-in-arm, and speak together as if we were friends."

"And do you meanwhile," said Davenant, "go before us, O'Byrne, and say we are coming on the best terms possible."

So said, so done. And Clara and Eleanor (seeing them arm-in-arm, and smiling as they entered) were completely deceived. Fielding then went to another part of the pit, and Davenant left them again, to speak to a lady in her box; where he remained, and in sight of them, the rest of the evening, to avoid inquiries. O'Byrne, on pretence of wanting to speak to a friend just going abroad, took care to leave them also, to escape questions.

Nor did either of the gentlemen return till the last ballet was ended, much to the vexation of the ladies, who wished to get into the passage room before the crowd assembled; because, if they did not do so, they knew very well it would be two in the morning, probably, before they should get home.

This was what the gentlemen wanted; as Davenant wished for an excuse to avoid entering the carriage. But their long absence, and their not returning till

the ladies were unavoidably forced to encounter the crowd, which Davenant knew they feared and abhorred, gave Clara and Eleanor painful confirmation of the truth. And when after great difficulty they reached the carriage at last, Davenant's refusal to accompany them, on account of the lateness of the hour and a bad head-ach, put the finishing stroke to their suspicions: and they returned home in unspeakable distress of mind.

Clara had found an opportunity of asking Davenant what he could have to say to Fielding.

"Oh," said he, "I have been interested in him, and wished to know him ever since he sung that song so feelingly which you, I am told, inspired."

"I think you will have a better reason for such a wish," replied Clara blushing, "when I tell you that a widowed sister and her four children live with him, who are chiefly dependent on him for support."

"Indeed, indeed, poor fellow!" cried Davenant starting and turning pale. And Clara's fears were thence so completely roused, that his subsequent conduct, stated above, easily increased them into agonizing certainty.

But what could they do?—Morley was gone to bed ill, and they could not venture to disturb him, as his physicians had ordered him to be perfectly quiet. While they were thus consulting, and doing nothing, a letter was brought to Clara from a friend of hers and Eleanor's, which raised their state of apparently helpless suffering to its climax.

"I write in haste and trepidation; but write I must. The Colonel, (meaning her husband,) who is, you know, not yet known to Mr. Davenant even personally, overheard him and Charles Fielding in high altercation last night in the lobby at the Opera, and this is the substance of what they said." [She then gave it verba-

tim.] "He could not interfere with any propriety himself; but he thought you might, if you knew the circumstance to-night, and by means of your uncle prevent the meeting. The colonel had some thoughts of speaking to Fielding, whom he knows a little: but when he followed him with that intention, he saw him take his second by the arm, and say with a sort of mad gaiety, 'Come, Frank! let us go to a coffee-house, and sup together;—it is not worth while to go to bed, and my will has long been made; so let us drown care in the heart-enlivening bowl.' He then dragged his friend along, and they disappeared amongst the carriages."

This letter put an end to Clara's only hope,—which was, that Fielding, when he had slept himself sober, would be willing to apologize for aught that he had said derogatory to Eleanor. But now a night passed not in sleep, but in an increase of

excitement, would she knew add to his irritability, and that no apology from him could be expected. But there was one way to induce Davenant to apologize, and that would do as well—But was it practicable? And while she convinced herself it was, she thanked Heaven, and begged Eleanor to cease wringing her hands, and walking up and down the room,—and listen to her patiently.

"You see," she said, "that as Fielding means to drink instead of sleep all night, there is no chance of his apologizing when the meeting takes place; therefore, unless we can prevent it, fight they must."

"And how should we prevent it? However, there is comfort in the idea that Fielding's hand will be so unsteady he can't kill Davenant."

"But Davenant may kill *him*;—and is there any comfort in *that* idea? Poor Charles! and poor Ellen, his widowed

sister!" said Clara, bursting into tears. "How can you bear to contemplate the possibility of Charles's danger, even should Davenant be safe?"

"Clara," cried Eleanor, "is it possible that you love Fielding?"

"Love him! No; but is there no such thing, do you think, as pure disinterested humanity? O Eleanor! there is one way to prevent all danger to both, and you can save them."

"I!" said Eleanor, turning pale.

"Yes—by telling the truth to this generous man, who is going to risk his life in defence of your veracity; and by owning you *did* utter the falsehood of which Fielding accuses you. Have the courage to write to Davenant, owning that poor Charles has waltzed with you,—and Davenant will not think any apology too much."

"Absurd! how could I get a letter to him time enough?"

"My own footman, you know, is to be trusted; and he will go, I am sure, and watch at Davenant's door till he comes out to keep his appointment:—so you see nothing is easier."

"But it is not so easy for me to write the letter."

"No? Not to save the life of your lover and poor Charles? Eleanor, Eleanor, you have a heart, however it is choked up by weaknesses. Think how that heart will be wrung should Fielding fall, and fall your victim, as he would undoubtedly be, when you hear the sobs of his sister and her children, and hear them ask in vain for that only friend of which you have deprived them."

"I can then be their friend myself."

"Yes, but remorse will prey upon you still, Eleanor. And on the contrary, suppose Davenant falls—will you ever know peace again? When you remember

that an ill-placed confidence in your superiority to the meanness attributed to you, has been the cause of his dying a violent death in the prime of his days—can you bear to witness.... ?" Clara could not go on; the idea of Davenant's death was too insupportable, and she covered her face with her hands.

Clara had done wrong; she had used an offensive word—the word *meanness;* and Eleanor resented it:—her other lies were respectable compared to this, and she knew it; for this was wholly the result of selfish fear for herself—the fear of sinking in the estimation of Davenant; and in angry sullen silence she listened to Clara.

"Well, Eleanor, are you convinced that there is only one step to be taken to preserve the lives perhaps of two individuals, to call them by no tenderer name, which you have endangered?"

"They may not be in danger; and I

am not prepared for such a self-sacrifice."

"Self-sacrifice! Self-exaltation it will turn out to be."

Clara paused, awaiting her answer; but she spoke not.

"Well then, Miss Musgrave," cried Clara, "if you will not write, I will. I will tell the whole truth; and when I say that I have seen you waltz, and that Fielding has not accused you unjustly, you know Mr. Davenant will believe me instantly."

"You *dare* not do this," exclaimed Eleanor; "or if you do, beware of your motives, Miss Delancy; you will act from a wish to break off my marriage with Davenant, and not from a disinterested desire of preserving lives."

"Has my recent interference proved me inclined to such baseness? Did my letter into Surrey prove it? Ungrateful girl! But I care not what motives you

attribute to me—my duty is an obvious one, and I will perform it." She then instantly sat down to write: when Eleanor, seeing she was resolute, thought it would be better for her to make a merit of necessity; and snatching the pen from Clara, she declared, if it must be so, she would write herself." And she wrote as follows:—

"Risk not your precious life, and lift not, I charge you, your hand against poor Fielding, in defence of my injuries; for he has *only spoken the truth.* I have often waltzed, and *he has waltzed with me;* but the fear of sinking in your esteem, which was already become as precious to me as my existence, urged me, in the sudden flutter and alarm of the moment, to deny the fact as I did.

"Humiliating as this avowal is, I hesitate not to make it; and I implore you not to let me have endured the agony of it in vain.

"Oh! regard my fault with the eyes of mercy, not of justice—and pity

"The repentant

"ELEANOR MUSGRAVE."

This letter Clara intrusted to the care of her confidential servant, who had lived many years in the family; and he promised to take his station near Mr. Davenant's door, at four in the morning, and wait there till he came out. But neither Eleanor nor Clara could go to bed; and they remained together, walking up and down the apartments, to await the return of the servant.

Davenant meanwhile passed a sleepless and restless night. His will was made, and all his worldly affairs nearly settled—therefore they did not burthen his mind: but the idea of acting contrary to his principles, and depriving a fellow creature of life, did; and when he remembered that if Fielding fell, his sister and her children would lose their chief sup-

port, he shuddered as if he was going to commit a terrible crime. And was he not going to commit one? Were not the words—"Thou shalt not kill"—words of meaning, and words to be obeyed?

The result of his reflections and of his supplications that night was, not to fight with Fielding; but he resolved to go notwithstanding to the place of meeting, and to try to pacify the wounded pride of his antagonist. "And *if* after all," said he to himself, "Fielding has only told *the truth?*"

The thought was misery; but it was only too natural that it should pass his mind. He also resolved, in order to avoid any temptation to break his resolution, to go unarmed. And having thus determined, he threw himself, dressed as he was, on his bed, and was able to sleep.

By five o'clock Clara's servant saw O'Byrne knock at Davenant's door, who rose himself to let him in. What passed

between them it is not necessary for me to relate. But O'Byrne seemed at length satisfied (though a high-spirited Irishman, an officer, and a most gallant one too,) that Davenant was right in his determination to *try* to make up the affair. But he did not think him right in leaving his pistols behind:—"However," thought he, "there are mine ready, if called for"—And they entered the street.

Clara's servant instantly presented Davenant with the letter.

"Pshaw!" said he, "I have no time to read letters now; and this is a strange hour to read one, Benson."

"Yes, sir; but notwithstanding, you must read it now."

"Must!"

"Yes: excuse my freedom, sir; but I have promised my dear lady, Miss Delancy, (whom I have left more dead than alive at home,) that I would not leave you till I had seen you read it."

"Well then, as she wishes it, I will."

He read it therefore, and almost groaned as he did so; for, though he had suspected that Fielding might possibly have spoken the truth, he shrunk with horror from this conviction of the fact; and staggering against the door, he hid his face for a moment.

But recovering himself, he took the arm of the wondering O'Byrne, saying, "We shall be late:" then turning to Benson, he desired him to tell his lady she had nothing to fear, that all danger was now at an end, as he knew his duty.

"Any message to Miss Musgrave?"

"None."

Benson then took his leave; and Davenant and O'Byrne proceeded to the Park.

Fielding and his second were already there; and Davenant beheld with emotion the agony depicted in the coun-

tenance of the former, spite of his assumed firmness.

"You are late, sir," said Fielding; "but before we proceed to business, let me intrust to your care, Mr. Davenant, in case I fall, this letter to Miss Delancy. It tells a secret which she must have long suspected, and which at *such* a moment I may venture to tell *even to her*; and it also commends to her well-known kindness the dear ones whom my death may make friendless.—And now, sir, I have done, and am ready."

"But *I* am not," said Davenant in a choked voice; and feeling irresistibly attracted towards the silent, *despairing lover of Clara Delancy*.

To be brief: Davenant, taking Fielding aside, as he did not like to expose Eleanor's conduct to O'Byrne, made such ample apologies to Fielding, that he could not but cordially accept them; and then,

in justice to Eleanor, he put her letter into his hands.

"I believe Clara urged her to do this," was in Fielding's *thoughts*; but he did not utter them: and he returned the letter in silence.

"We had all better go to bed again now, I fancy," said Davenant. And they proceeded together, Davenant taking Fielding's arm, and O'Byrne his.

Davenant would not have been sorry if O'Byrne had left him alone with Fielding; but that warm-hearted man experienced, like himself, a feeling of strong interest in the lover of Clara Delancy, as he more than suspected him to be, and wished to see more of him. He was also sure that he must be a *hopeless* lover as well as himself, while Davenant remained unmarried; since his eye, rendered penetrating by jealousy, had discovered, though Davenant's had not, that

the preference which he would have given half his fortune to excite, Davenant had excited unconsciously, and without intending to do it. And till Davenant was indeed another's, and Clara's principles were called upon to combat her inclination, he was very sure she could never love any other man. O'Byrne also saw that Davenant was not in love with Eleanor, and that he greatly admired Clara; nor could he at all reconcile to himself the present situation of affairs; especially as, with all his delicate consideration for Eleanor, Davenant was not able to conceal entirely from O'Byrne, that she had acted ill, and was the cause of the projected duel.

"Let her look to it," said O'Byrne to himself, as they went to the scene of action; "or she will never be Mrs. Davenant."

The three gentlemen walked some time in silence down Piccadilly, at the bottom of which Fielding, starting from

his reverie, said—"I fear, gentlemen, I have led you much out of your way—here then I will take my leave, as I am going to Parliament-street."

"It was my wish," replied Davenant, "to accompany you, as the morning is fine, and I am not inclined for bed myself, though I recommended it to you."

And O'Byrne, professing himself equally disinclined to sleep, declared he would go also, adding, "for indeed, Mr. Fielding, I wish to be better acquainted with you."

Davenant thought that Fielding did not much like his companions should accompany him any further: still, from the difficulty of retracting his determination, he continued to go on;—and they found themselves at Fielding's lodging, which was at the entrance of Parliament-street, before he was aware of it. It was in a small court, and consequently seemed a situation chosen for œconomy's sake, as well as for its vicinity to the public office

in which Fielding had accepted a place, as he was not rich enough to pursue the study of the law, when his widowed sister and her orphans became in a degree dependent on him.

Mrs. O'Donovan, Fielding's sister, was the widow of an Irish officer, who had fallen in the service, leaving her with four children, and nothing but her pension from government to maintain them. But in her brother she found a protector, and her orphans a father. Consequently this kind brother possessed the grateful affections of her widowed heart; and her children (amongst whom was a beautiful girl of seventeen) looked up to Fielding with an almost filial love.

No wonder then that his absence from home during a whole night, should have filled them with almost insupportable anxiety, and that they should have sat up together,—sometimes calming each other's fears, sometimes exciting them,—

nor that they should be watching at the door of the house for this beloved being's return, when he and his companions appeared at the gate of the court.

The moment they saw Fielding, who on discovering them involuntarily rushed forward to meet them, his sister—speechless with overwhelming emotions—threw herself on his neck; while his niece hung fondly on his arm, and, as the tears coursed each other down her lovely face, sobbed out (with an Irish accent, which reached to the very heart of O'Byrne) "And is it your own dear sister and niece, my darling uncle, that you could be after afflicting in this way? Oh! will I ever forgive you, dear?"

"And the sweet creature is my own country woman too," whispered O'Byrne to Davenant, who, like him, did not see this scene unmoved. But beautiful as Mary O'Donovan was, he was not at

that moment sensible of her beauty. The idea that his arm had nearly been raised against this beloved brother and uncle, was uppermost in his mind; accompanied by an eager desire to befriend, if he could, the interesting family before him.

But all his speculations were soon suspended, and even O'Byrne's tender admiration; for Fielding (overcome by his night's sleepless excess and anxiety, and the emotion occasioned by the sight of his sister and her daughter,) turned suddenly faint, and would have fallen had not Davenant and O'Byrne rushed forward and caught him in their arms, while the terrified mother and daughter led the way to a parlour, where they laid him on a sofa, and assisted in endeavours to revive him.

They soon succeeded; and when he recovered his recollection, a violent burst of tears, which he shed on the bosom of

his sister, relieved his own oppressed heart, and quieted theirs.

"He will be better now," cried O'Byrne; "be easy, dear souls, he is alive and well, and we will leave him to tell you all in his own way."

"Then there is something to tell," exclaimed Mrs. O'Donovan, while Davenant vainly tried to answer her, vexed at the alarm which O'Byrne had so unnecessarily excited.

"O yes!" answered O'Byrne, recollecting himself, "there is something very agreeable to tell, as I hope Mr. Fielding has made two new friends tonight, in this gentleman and myself; and I am sure I should be both proud and obliged to be allowed to pay my compliments here again at a more convenient hour and more suitable opportunity."

"And so should I," said Davenant, taking

Fielding's shaking hand and pressing it kindly; "but now, with many apologies to these ladies for this involuntary intrusion, we take our leave."

"Good bye, my dear fellow," said O'Byrne, also shaking him by the hand; "and mark me, Mr. Fielding,—if you ever again presume to fill those beautiful eyes with such big tears, you shall answer it to me, sir; and I don't care if I blow out your brains myself."

He then bowed most profoundly low to the ladies; and looking back at Mary, as long as he could see her, he followed Davenant into the street.

They walked some way in silence; but Davenant was recalled to present objects by O'Byrne's suddenly exclaiming—"But oh she is too young!"

"Who is too young?" said Davenant, looking earnestly at him.

O'Byrne blushed, and turned away his head, uttering, "Pshaw! nobody in par-

ticular: it is only a silly way that I have of talking in my sleep, as it were."

"She is certainly uncommonly handsome," replied Davenant, smiling.

"She! Who?" asked the conscious O'Byrne; then added with a deep sigh, "Ah! my dear friend, I see you have caught me. But now do own that *she* (for I don't know her name) is very like Miss Delancy."

Davenant, though in no humour for laughing, could not resist this attempt of O'Byrne's to reconcile to himself his infidelity to Clara, by fancying Mary like her; and he replied, as soon as his laughter allowed him, "Yes, O'Byrne, yes, as much as a black-eyed, dark-haired, slender little girl can be like a blue-eyed, fair-haired, tall and formed woman of three-and-twenty."

"Ah! but they are alike though," said O'Byrne, looking rather foolish; "and I hope I shall see the little one

again, and her mother too,—who is very comely also."

Davenant agreed with him in the hopes and the opinion; and then, as he could not yet endure the thoughts of seeing Eleanor, he begged O'Byrne to call at his uncle's on his way home, as he thought he should be expected there, to say for him all that was necessary to quiet the alarm of Clara and Eleanor.

He did so; and having spoken peace to their troubled minds, he prevailed on them to go to bed immediately; but he did not allow them to go till he had drawn tears from their eyes, and nearly from his own, by a description of the scene at the lodgings of Charles Fielding.

"I will call on dear Ellen O'Donovan this morning," said Clara feelingly; and Eleanor would have been only too happy to have been able to say she would do the same. But conscious shame

forbade her to pay the visit; and while Clara on reaching her chamber soon fell into a calm refreshing sleep, the pillow of Eleanor remained feverish and sleepless.

Davenant meanwhile returned to his own lodgings, perturbed, perplexed, unhappy, and was continually saying to himself, "How can I ever venture to marry a woman on whose word I can have no dependence?"

It was a prospect he could not yet bear to dwell upon; he therefore turned from it to a pleasanter subject of contemplation: namely, a plan for improving the situation of Fielding; and before he went to bed he wrote a note, requesting him to dine with him at a coffee-house the next day.

It was late before he rose; and it was very reluctantly that he dressed to go to dine at his uncle's, as he dreaded his next meeting with Eleanor. But when he

went, he found she was too ill to rise; and it was really a relief to his mind, as Clara assured him she was only suffering from uneasiness of mind, and the dread of seeing him, and perhaps of seeing "your altered eye too," added Clara with a faint smile.

"Has she not deserved to meet my altered eye?" said Davenant, who had been previously informed by Clara that Eleanor wished her uncle to remain in ignorance of the whole transaction. "And even now, you see, she enjoins concealment. You must own that this last violation of truth is far worse than the other."

"She feels that herself," replied Clara; "and I do assure you, that if any thing can prevent her from a repetition of her errors, the terrors and agony of last night and to-day will I am convinced do it."

"*If* any thing can cure her! Oh! Miss Delancy, even your candour speaks

with an *if*.' However, I see that I must wear the chains which I have forged for myself; and I will bear them as well as I can."

In the evening Eleanor was prevailed on to rise: and when she came down, in a most becoming undress, and with every appearance of excessive dejection, Davenant's heart was so softened by her beauty and her tears, that he promised to think no more of a fault which was, he owned, only too common, and which in this instance was occasioned by anxiety for his good opinion.

The next day, however, Eleanor, being once more assured of her prize, though she still "rejoiced in trembling," resumed her usual spirits, and every trace of self-blame and consequent dejection was gone. But Davenant, instead of rejoicing in her recovered smiles, was so mortified at her want of proper feeling, that when he came to his uncle's in the evening,

after dining with Fielding, he could not help mentioning his mortification to Clara, when he was alone with her; nor could he help adding, when he bade her good night, "Oh! Miss Délancy, why was it my hard fate to find you attached and engaged to Lieutenant Beaumont?"

Clara stood for some minutes motionless on the spot where he left her. "I attached and engaged to Lieutenant Beaumont! Cruel perfidious girl!" she exclaimed; "this must have been your doing; and *now* I understand the suppressed tenderness of Davenant's manner to me; now I know why, though he preferred me, he was led to address another. But I can undeceive him, and it is not yet too late; and Eleanor deserves no delicacy, no consideration from me." But something whispered her that it *was indeed too late*; and Clara passed another sleepless night.

The next day a feeling of perturbation

difficult to be conquered, prevented her from asking Davenant, when he came to a late breakfast, what he meant by his allusion to Lieutenant Beaumont; and soon after breakfast Davenant and Morley retired to the study of the latter.

Clara, when the gentlemen left her, went into Eleanor's apartment, who was only just risen, and had resumed her *interesting languor* and her *touching depression*, meaning to preserve them all that day at least, and not to appear below stairs; as her quick observation had discovered that Davenant's manner had grown cold whenever she seemed to recover her spirits; and that it was kind only when she seemed depressed.

As Clara was now alone with her, she was going to ask her, what she had said concerning her and Mr. Beaumont, when Morley's under footman came in, evidently a little in liquor, but only enough to give him courage without disordering

his understanding. Having entered the room, he shut the door, and said to Eleanor, "I want you to do me a kindness, miss. Master has given me warning, because I was not home till you were, that night you were so late at the Opera; for I went out to a frolic, without leave."

"Well, well, name your request," said Eleanor.

"It is that you would tell my master that, as you had given your servant leave to go out, you had taken me to the Opera, and that I was there waiting for you all the time."

"What insolence!" cried Eleanor, blushing deeply at this impudent request: "Do you expect me to tell a lie to your master for your sake?"

"Why not, miss? I have often told my master lies, and other people too, for yours."

"Leave the room this moment," cried

Eleanor: "How dare you speak thus to me?"

"Why, you know it is all true, and that one good turn deserves another," said he, (while Eleanor vainly made signs to him not to speak before Clara)—"but if I must go, I must; and if you will not tell a white lie to keep me in my place, it is all very well, miss; and I see there is no gratitude in the world." So saying he left the room, and shutting the door with great violence, ran hastily down stairs; while Eleanor, though she anxiously wished to run after him, dared not go, as she was *acting the invalid*, and had declared herself unable to leave her room.

Clara was now going to demand an explanation of this extraordinary scene, but was prevented by the entrance of Eleanor's mantua-maker, who came to take orders; and as she exhibited patterns of dresses, Eleanor was so plea-

santly engaged, that she forgot her anxiety concerning the insolent footman. Poor Eleanor! she little thought what was passing in her uncle's study.

While Morley and Davenant were looking over papers, the angry footman entered the room, and said, "he was going away, he found, directly; but as he hoped his master would give him a good character, he came to convince him, by unburthening his conscience, that if ever he did wrong he was penitent for it; and that he must own Miss Musgrave had tempted him more than once to deceive his good master."

"How!" cried both gentlemen at once.

"Yes, 'tis very true. You remember, sir, you and Mr. Davenant saw an officer go out of the door one day, and you asked me who it was, and Miss Musgrave had desired me to say that it was a gentleman to Miss Delancy, whereas as how it was Captain Lethbridge to her."

"Can this be true?" said Davenant to his uncle.

"I really don't know; but...."

"Nay, 'tis all true, and more. That night, sir, that she staid from the Opera she expected the captain to call; and she said if he did, I was to call her out, and say it was the mantua-maker who wanted her; and you may remember I did say so; and she went out and staid some time."

"Yes, yes—so she did—so she did; but I cannot believe your story."

"Nor I," cried Davenant; "my betrothed wife having clandestine meetings with another man! Impossible!"

"May be you think she can't write to another man either: but there—as I am now no longer your servant and never was hers—there is a letter to the captain, which I was to put in the post; but as she has refused me a kindness, why should I do her one?—so there it is."

Morley took the letter, speechless with rage and consternation, and instantly broke the seal.

"Hold, sir! what are you doing?" cried Davenant.

"My duty—my duty both to her as a guardian, and to you as an uncle: remember, she is still my ward, and I had forbidden her to encourage Captain Lethbridge's addresses." He then eagerly read the letter; and with every limb trembling with agitation he desired her treacherous agent to leave the room, and let Miss Musgrave be summoned to attend him.

The footman obeyed: and as he left the room Clara entered on some message to her uncle, and beheld with alarm the countenances of both the gentlemen.—"What has happened? What is the matter?" cried she.

"You will soon know," replied her uncle, giving Eleanor's letter to Davenant, who, though he was shocked at the du-

plicity of the writer, was glad to find his emancipation was now secure.

Eleanor sent word that she was not able to come down stairs, she therefore begged to see the gentlemen and Miss Delancy in her dressing-room; and they obeyed the summons.

"So, madam!" said her uncle, "I have discovered in what manner my ward treats my nephew, her affianced husband. So, madam! I find you receive clandestine visits, and write clandestine letters to a Captain Lethbridge, spite of your solemn engagements to Mr. Davenant."

"Who says—who dares...."

"Nay, nay—beware, Miss Musgrave, nor add more falsehood to treachery, already terrible to me," cried Davenant; while Clara, pale and trembling, supported herself by the chair next her.

"Look, madam!" cried Morley, "the man whom you bribed to tell me lies has turned informer; and I have read this

letter from you to Lethbridge, in which you tell him, 'that spite of all he hears and sees, your marriage with my nephew is by no means sure; that I, your cruel guardian, persecute you to marry him, because I think he will die if you do not, as he is most devotedly attached to you; and that as for five years more you must be entirely in my power, you are afraid your weakness of character may at length lead you to yield to my importunities; but that at present you hold out, as his image reigns triumphant, and you must ever love him best, even though you marry Davenant.' There, madam! there are your hand-writing and your signature. I presume you do not pretend to deny them?"

"Hear me, sir—hear me," cried Eleanor, clasping her hands in agony; "it was fear for Mr. Davenant's life that led me to write thus; for Lethbridge has threatened it; and all I wished was,

to be married during his absence at quarters, unknown to him; for indeed, indeed, Mr. Davenant, I love you best, and only you."

"You say the same thing," he replied, "to Captain Lethbridge, madam: consequently you must deceive one of us, and can deserve confidence from neither: therefore, though every thing for our marriage is far advanced, this letter justifies me to myself, and to every one, for declaring our engagement null and void, now and for ever."

Eleanor instantly fell into strong hysterics, and was conveyed to her chamber: and Clara, pitying while she blamed her, assisted to convey her to her apartment.

The paroxysm however soon subsided; and as Eleanor desired to be left alone, Clara returned into the study. She found Davenant informing her guardian, that he thought it would be only delicate

and proper in him to leave London for a short time, under the present circumstances; and both Morley and Clara agreed with him in opinion.

Accordingly he set off for his estate in Surrey that evening; having previously been informed by Clara, that Eleanor had told her she intended to visit an invalid sister in Devonshire, as soon as she was able to undertake the journey.

"In that case, sir," said Davenant to his uncle, "I shall return to town as soon as you inform me that Miss Musgrave is gone."

"Then I shall announce her departure to you," replied Morley, "as soon as it has taken place."

When Clara returned to Eleanor after she had taken leave of Davenant, she found her in stronger hysterics than she had yet witnessed: but as her quick ear now distinguished in her convulsive sobs, the tone of real anguish, rather than that

of mortified feeling and angry disappointment, she felt more compassion for her than she had experienced on her first attack; and wondered what had caused this new agitation, so evidently deriving its source from *the misery of the heart.*

Her wonder was not of long continuance; for Eleanor, unable to speak, put a letter into her hand recently received from Captain Lethbridge; in which he told her, that having discovered she had deceived him in her assurances that there was nothing as yet fixed between her and Mr. Davenant, for that he *now knew* her wedding-dresses were making, he declared he would never see or speak to her again, but forget as soon as possible a woman so treacherous, so false, and so wholly unworthy of the love of a fond and confiding heart.

Clara felt herself moved to excessive pity when she read this letter, and saw the real anguish which it occasioned

Eleanor, though she could not but own the retribution was just; since Eleanor, led by ambition and probably by less worthy motives, had prevailed on herself to *woo* and to *accept* the addresses of a man whom she did not love, and to give up the man whom she did.

Still Clara was as yet unable to understand why Eleanor had played a double part on this occasion; and why, when she was sure of marrying Davenant, she had not resolutely given up Lethbridge.

When Eleanor was more composed, Clara could not help interrogating her on this subject; and she at length drew from her a confession that, though she was apparently on the eve of marriage with Davenant, she had always a sort of conviction on her mind that something would happen to prevent the union from taking place. But she could not prevail on herself to give Clara a reason for this apprehension. She could not bear to own

to her, that it proceeded from a conviction of Davenant's having conquered his repugnance to her character, merely by the force of grateful pity for her supposed attachment to himself—an attachment which he was taught to believe pernicious to her health and her peace; and as she was conscious that before the wedding-day arrived many more proofs of her disingenuousness and disregard to truth might come out, sufficient to justify Davenant, to his own mind at least, in breaking off the connexion, she thought it better not to give up entirely the man whom her heart preferred, till she was certain of obtaining him who was the choice of her ambition.

But now both were lost to her: though she still flattered herself she should be able to convince Lethbridge she had broken with Davenant for his sake; and in the mean while she resolved to conceal her mortification and uneasi-

ness in a distant county, and there concert means to bring about a reconciliation with Lethbridge. But as she wished to give her own colouring to the rupture with Davenant, she refused to accept Clara's offer to attend her to her sister's—since she feared her observant eye, and undeviating sincerity. Nor was it long before she set off for Devonshire, leaving Clara so full of hope and happiness, that she seemed to have changed characters with Eleanor, and to wonder that she could ever think life, as she had lately done, a burthen which she should at any time be glad to lay down.

"Surely," said Clara to herself, "I shall now have no difficulty in telling Mr. Davenant I am not engaged to any one; and then....." But the next moment she recollected, that if she had such difficulty in prevailing on herself to say this to him when he was an engaged man, how much more difficult would it be for

her to say it now he was disengaged! Still this recollection had not power to depress her spirits, "for was not Davenant freed from a woman unworthy of him? and was not that enough to exhilarate the woman who tenderly loved him?"

In the meanwhile Clara was impatient for Davenant's return: but he arrived even sooner than she could have expected, after the receipt of his uncle's letter.

Clara, not knowing he was returned, came singing down stairs, and with a light step bounded into her guardian's study, whom she had left alone.

On seeing Davenant, her usual reserve of manner returned; and her buoyant spirits were lost, in the consciousness that tell-tale blushes were now mantling on her cheek;—and while Davenant, pleased and flattered at her confusion, came forward to meet her, blushing almost as deeply as herself, Morley began

to believe that after all he was wrong concerning the poor lieutenant.

"Sidney," said he, "I cannot think what is come to that girl. She is now more riotous, I think, than ever poor Eleanor was—there she goes, singing about the house—she comes down stairs two steps at a time, and seems to have forgotten that there is such a thing as walking in a sober steady pace. I have heard you admire Clara's pensive graces, Sidney; if so, I am afraid you will miss your old favourites very much; for they are certainly gone."

"I am inclined to think," replied Davenant, "that I shall always admire Miss Delancy's present graces so much, that I shall not be conscious I ever admired any other."

"Very gallant indeed! But come, Sidney, you must own that it is very unfeeling and very unsentimental in Clara, to be in such high spirits so soon after her

friend Eleanor's departure, and under such circumstances too. Answer, Clara, and defend yourself if you can."

"That I can very easily," she replied, with a degree of blushing archness which became her much. "True, Eleanor is my friend; but then I have another friend, full as old a friend as Eleanor, and certainly as estimable; and while I deplore Eleanor's disappointment, I am abundantly consoled by the consciousness of—of—"

"Of what?" cried Davenant.

"Of his deliverance."

"Deliverance indeed I think it," said Morley; "but surely, Clara, *you* once thought it a very suitable match."

"Never, sir; never."

"Never! You amaze me. I thought you said,—that is, you thought, my dear, that——" here Morley began to recollect that he had assured Davenant Clara had said what she never uttered, in order to nfluence his nephew; and he became so

confused, that he was glad to make an excuse to leave the room; and Davenant was left alone with Clara.

"You surprise me—you agreeably surprise me," said Davenant; "for my uncle assured me you were desirous that I should be the husband of your friend."

"Is it possible?"

"It is most true;" and he repeated with great accuracy all that Morley had ever said on the subject.

Clara was at first speechless with vexation and surprise; but she soon convinced Davenant that she had not said any thing on which Morley could with truth have grounded what he asserted; except that she had owned she thought the behaviour of Davenant and Eleanor in the coach resembled that of lovers; and you know," she added, smiling, but blushing, "that I was very correct in that assertion."

Nor could the conscious Davenant deny the fact.

"Alas!" observed Clara, "this was some of my guardian's *white lying*, in which he sees *no harm*. Yet for what purpose did he say this? Still he could not have said it without design."

And both Davenant and Clara fell into silent consideration of what his motives could be.

At this moment company was announced in the drawing-room; and Davenant took his leave to return no more till the next day, as he was engaged to dine out. But he was in no frame of mind to be an agreeable companion at any party, as hope once more had possession of his heart, and he wanted to indulge in the pleasing reveries into which it threw him; for, if his uncle was capable of deceiving him voluntarily in *one* instance, he might in another; and Clara might be free both heart and hand. But then the sword and other things recurred to him; still hope predominated,

and he resolved to have an explanation with Clara the next day.

Accordingly he came to his uncle's, prepared to ask herself whether she was an engaged woman or not; but he sought her in vain in the front drawing-room, where she usually sat; and laying his hat down, he went into his uncle's study.

He too was absent; he therefore returned into the front drawing-room, in which, just as he entered, he saw Clara in tears, leaning on the shoulder of a young man in a military great coat, while he, kissing her cheek, as he pressed her to his bosom, uttered an earnest "God bless you!" and rushing past Davenant disappeared in a moment.

Davenant for an instant stood riveted to the spot in painful emotion. The question he came to ask was, he feared, answered already, and that he had just beheld the envied Beaumont.

The thought was insupportable, and

he too ran down stairs, and out of the house: but he had not gone far when he recollected that he had no hat on, and that he had left it on the drawing-room table. He was therefore forced to go back; and when he re-entered the rooms he found Clara leaning with her head on her hands, in such evident agitation that pity and alarm became his predominant feelings, and he sat down by her, resolved to discover the cause of her distress, and to do all in his power to relieve it. He began by asking her if the gentleman who had just left her was not Mr. Beaumont. She replied in the affirmative. He then asked if he was going to the West Indies with his regiment She replied that he was; and then with a beating heart prepared herself for the next question which she expected Davenant was about to ask.

"Miss Delancy," said Davenant, "what I have witnessed this morning determines

me to leave London to-morrow, on a tour through England; but before I go, I wish to prove how dear, how very dear to me is the happiness of *Mrs. Delancy's daughter.*"

Here he rose, and traversed the room in great agitation; but re-seating himself, he said—"There was a time—for why should I be ashamed to own it?—when I hoped to transfer the affection which I once felt for the mother to the equally idolized daughter; but scarcely had I seen you, and found how capable you were of realizing my high-raised hopes of happiness, when I was told you were attached, if not engaged, to a Lieutenant Beaumont."

"Who told you so?" said Clara, interrupting him.

"My uncle; and Eleanor by hints, or rather more than hints, confirmed his assertion."

"I suspected as much," observed Clara.

And Davenant continued:—"What they said was confirmed also by circumstances, and what I have seen this morning puts the question beyond a doubt; and all the faint hope with which I entered the house is vanished for ever. Now then, ever dear Clara, listen to the voice of a friend—and let me prove myself one." [Here he paused in strong emotion; and Clara, too happy and too agitated to speak, covered her face with her handkerchief.]

"Clara," continued Davenant, recovering his voice, "you, as yet, have no power over your fortune; but I have money and interest, and I offer you both, to get your lover exchanged into a regiment which is not likely to be sent into a dangerous climate like that of the West Indies, and then I will lend him money to purchase promotion. Sweet indeed it would have been to me to try to promote your happiness myself; but as that is impos-

sible, I will console myself by endeavouring to promote it with another. Speak, Miss Delancy—tell me you pity me, and will console me by accepting my offer."

Clara now took her handkerchief from her face, and smiling through her tears, said, while she placed her hand on his—"I do accept your offer, for and in the name of Lieutenant Beaumont; and it has relieved my mind from fears concerning him, which have pressed heavily upon it. But let me beseech you never to *reveal* what he is *to me*."

"Never, if you desire me not."

"I do. Then know that Lieutenant Beaumont is—"

"What?" said Davenant, almost gasping for breath.

"'*My father's son, and my brother!*' Thank heaven," cried Davenant, bursting into tears, the result of mingled and overwhelming feelings, amongst

which joy was predominant. And Clara, though with a faltering voice, continued thus:—"The secret of the relationship was disclosed to me by my mother, who heard it from my father in the earliest days of their courtship; but it was told by him to her alone, and by her to me only, that I might continue to Mr. Beaumont, after her death, the friendship which she had ever shown him. Impatiently therefore have I awaited the time of my coming of age, that I might be able to assist him in the line of his profession. But being, like my mother, unwilling to expose my father to blame of any kind, I too have kept our relationship secret, and so has Beaumont: to you, however, I have made no scruple of revealing it, because I know it is safe, and—"

"And why," said Davenant, eagerly approaching her, and taking her unreluctant hand; "speak on, dearest Clara,

and tell me why you have confided to me a secret withheld from every one else?"

"Because," replied Clara in a faint voice, "it may perhaps, some time or other, be my duty, as well as pleasure, to have no reserve from you."

And Davenant, understanding how much these words implied, was not slow to take advantage of them.

Explanations between lovers are very satisfactory to the parties concerned, but very foolish things to describe;—so I will not attempt it. Suffice, that Clara was as ingenuous as Davenant had been, and owned to him that his attachment had not preceded hers; and Mr. Morley returned from his morning business, to find to his surprise, those whom he had left friends become engaged lovers,—though delicacy and propriety forbade them to think of declaring their engagement for even months to come.

But while Morley congratulated his nephew and his ward on the prospect of a union which he owned was a well assorted one, he was struck by the coldness, almost amounting to severity, with which both Clara and Davenant addressed him. But as they were too ingenuous to conceal the cause of their displeasure, it was not long before both Davenant and Clara told him that his inaccuracy of representation, not to call it by a harsher name, was such, and had nearly been so pernicious in its consequences, that it called for the most severe reprehension on their part; and they hoped that he, like Eleanor, would take warning by experience, and learn that even *white lies* may be in their result as destructive of the happiness of others as those which are denominated the wicked and the malignant. In short, that he would lay it down as a rule of conduct, that no actions are certain to be right, safe, and

respectable, of which truth is not the impeller and the guide.

"Upon my word, young people," replied Morley, trying to laugh, but more inclined to cry, "you are very conceited, and very presumptuous, in thus laying down the law to me, and taking me to task, as if I were a child, and you were gray beards. But perhaps you are right: still, how could I foresee that Eleanor would turn out such a naughty girl?"

"No; but still you knew I was always inclined to love Clara best; and think what misery your misrepresentation had nearly fixed on me for life!"

"And on me too," cried Clara unguardedly, but with great feeling.

"On you too!" cried Morley archly; "Would Sidney's marrying Eleanor have made you miserable?"

"At least," replied Clara, "it would have doomed me to a single life; for I

believe I should never have loved another man."

"Say no more, girl," said Morley with much emotion, while Davenant fondly pressed her hand to his heart; "I shudder to think that I have been so near making two such excellent beings wretched. And now I feel that the best amends I can make you at this moment is leaving you together....but what is to become of the poor lieutenant?"

"He remains to me the friend he always was, and no more;" replied Clara; "for I assure you he is engaged, though not to me; and Davenant will try to promote him."

Morley then asked no more questions, but left the lovers alone.

Davenant now informed Clara that he had been so fortunate as to procure Fielding a higher appointment, and, consequently, a greater salary, in the office in which he now was; and that there was

no doubt but that he would in time be promoted still further.

I will add here that Mrs. O'Donovan was, a few months after, married to the man who had been the first choice of her young heart; and who was now able to maintain her in affluence, and to be a father to her children; that Colonel O'Byrne had not much difficulty in transferring his affections from Clara Delaney to Mary O'Donovan, whom he still persisted to think a striking likeness of the former; and that Mary, with her mother and uncle's entire and delighted approbation, bestowed her hand, as well as her heart, on the warmhearted Irishman.

Eleanor meanwhile had no opportunity of attempting to regain the affection of Captain Lethbridge, as he married another woman two months after he broke off his acquaintance with her; not being

recalled to his allegiance to her by the news of her rupture with Davenant.

But whether she felt the loss of him or not is very problematical; as, not long after the marriage of Davenant and Clara took place, she accepted the addresses of a nobleman many years older than herself, whom she met at Sidmouth.

A different result has attended the marriages of Clara and of Eleanor, as might well be expected from the difference of their characters.

Eleanor's husband is naturally enough jealous of his young and beautiful wife, who, by her habitual disregard of truth, has wholly annihilated his confidence in her word, and therefore exposes herself often to the suspicion of errors which she is incapable of, by the constant detection of that guilt to which she is continually *prone*. If she goes out alone, her husband, on her return, does not

believe that she has only been to such a place, and seen only certain persons;—and if he accompanies her abroad, he fancies he sees signs of secret intelligence in her manner, and that her eyes, when turned from him, are employed in conveying signals of invitation to approach, or hints to *forbear* approaching her; while her life is passed in a series of domestic bickerings *at home*, and endless preparations for them *abroad*.

Not such is the life of Clara and of Davenant. Mutual confidence, the result of mutual esteem, founded on a knowledge of each other's unsullied integrity, makes their hours glide away in uninterrupted happiness; while their children (early taught that a love and practice of truth are the only sure foundation of that moral character which, by exciting confidence, leads not only to peace of mind, but to the esteem and respect of our friends and fellow-crea-

tures) are likely to grow daily in virtue under the watchful eyes of their affectionate parents; and to reward those parents for the PRECEPTS which they TEACH, and the EXAMPLE which they GIVE.

HENRY WOODVILLE:

A TALE.

THERE never was a happier family than that of Mr. Woodville, nor one whose happiness seemed more likely to last. He was a prosperous manufacturer in a large city; his eldest son was clerk to a general merchant in London, and was sure when he was old enough of having a share in the firm; for the head partner in the firm had no children, and it was thought likely that Henry Woodville would be his heir. Elizabeth Woodville too, the eldest daughter, was going to be remarkably well married in every point of view, and her success in life exhibited the triumph

of character and female attraction over pride and prejudice; for her lover was rich and highly connected, and his father had forbidden him to think of making a woman his wife who had neither high birth nor fortune: but chance having thrown Elizabeth in Mr. Harcourt's way, (where he did not know her nor she him, and under circumstances which called forth from her some of those little services that women alone can render,) he was so charmed with her person, manner, and qualities, that, as soon as he knew who she was, he retracted his prohibition to the union, and even bestowed on it the warmest approbation; and as soon as his son was five-and-twenty it was settled that they were to marry.

Henry Woodville was now looking forward with great impatience to the hour when he should be taken into the firm; for he had lately fallen in love, though the object of his passion was not only

wholly unconscious of it, but had never even looked at him to the best of his belief.

She had three or four times accompanied her mother to Mr. Courtnay's, when she came to speak to him on business relative to the disposal of a large stock of wine left by her deceased husband, and had been too modest to look at any one; therefore Woodville was sure her eyes had never met his: but still *he* had looked and loved; and though her mother's situation was such as to forbid his raising his hopes to the possession of her daughter while he was a clerk, he knew that, when in business for himself, she would have no right to look down on him. Accordingly he chose to *feed* rather than starve his passion, and he always contrived to meet them in the Mall in St. James's park on a Sunday evening, where habited in his best array, with his *couteau de chasse* by his side, (that being the dress

costume in the reign during which the circumstances that I have to relate happened.) he hoped to attract the eyes of Anna Vincent, and lead her to read in his, the wishes of his heart. But he tried in vain: and once when he had an opportunity of doing her a service, and perhaps of catching her eye, the timidity of true love prevented him from taking advantage of the opportunity; for his less interested companion took up the glove she dropped, and on presenting it to her, received that look and those smiling thanks which to him would have been invaluable.

He consoled himself, however, by the thought, that when he was a partner in the concern, he would get his kind friend Mr. Courtnay to introduce him, and then perhaps she would look at him.

But a most sad and unexpected blow was now put to his expectations, and the prosperity of his family.

Circumstances over which he had no

control, and which no industry and no care could have prevented, brought on the ruin of Mr. Woodville. However, such was the universal conviction of his probity, and such the general opinion of his worth, that his certificate was instantly signed, and he enabled by his friends to go on with his business again. But though his creditors cheerfully took fifteen shillings in the pound in full of all demands, Mr. Woodville knew he should not rest till he had paid the full amount of his debt, with interest; and as his trade became very prosperous, and he lived in the most frugal manner in order to effect his purpose the sooner, he had every prospect of gratifying his laudable ambition. During this time he had also the satisfaction of finding, that his unmerited misfortunes had had no effect on Mr. Harcourt; but that the good man had said, "This is a misfortune that is unaccompanied with disgrace, and which

has only served to prove the high esteem in which Mr. Woodville is held, and to call forth in him the exhibition of new virtues."

Mr. Woodville might have had another gratification, but it was concealed from him. Mr. Courtnay had now taken Henry Woodville into the trade: he therefore resolved to shorten the duration of his parent's privations and frugal mode of living, by laying-by half of his annual income, in order to facilitate the full payment of his father's debts; and while this remained undone, he forbade himself to think of marrying, though he could not help loving the unconscious object of his passion, whose mother, having sustained some reduction of income, was gone from London with her daughter, in order to live cheap: but the place of her residence was not yet known to Mr. Courtnay.

Things went on in this manner for

three years; and at the end of that time Henry remitted his savings to his father, who at first refused to accept them; but on finding that they would liquidate the debt to all but a hundred pounds, he resolved to reward his son's filial piety by accepting them, as he preferred being his debtor to being that of any other man or men; and he wrote Henry, by return of post, such a letter as well repaid him for any sacrifice that he had made. Elizabeth's lover had great pleasure in making this trait in Henry's character known to his father, and he owned that he should be proud to be allied to so virtuous a family.

"Now then," thought Henry, "my income is nearly my own; the remaining hundred pounds will soon be gained by my father and me, and then I may think of marrying; and though Mrs. Vincent has left London, no doubt Mr. Courtnay will be able to find out her residence."

It was now the the race time at Read-

ing (in Berkshire); and Henry, who had hitherto rarely left business, and had on principle avoided all unnecessary expense, resolved, as he had never seen a race, to go to this; he also promised himself much pleasure from attending the race-ball, especially as he thought it was not impossible that chance might lead him to see his beloved there. Accordingly with the approbation of his partner he set off for the races.

There is, there can be no pleasure so great as that which has been earned by self-denial, and the surrender of one's own gratification for the sake of duty; and when Henry Woodville set off on his first pursuit of amusement, he experienced such a delightful flow of spirits, and such a feeling of joyous expectation as he had never known before, and which made the pleasant road along which he passed to the pretty town of Reading appear to him a sort of "opening paradise."

When he reached Reading, he found that the races were to begin the next day; and having discovered which was the most fashionable promenade, he repaired to it, in hopes of seeing the lady of his affections amongst the company. But he looked in vain; though love and fancy often clothed a coming object in her form, making the delusion sometimes so strong, that his heart throbbed violently with anticipated pleasure and emotion, till a nearer approach convinced him of his mistake. However, the evening was fine, the walk pleasant, the women handsome, and he was amused; since the sunshine from within met and increased the sunshine without, and there was also hope for the morrow!

The morrow came, and Henry repaired to the race-ground. He surveyed the carriages with a scrutinizing eye;—but she was not there. He went on the

stand, but he beheld her not,—and he was disappointed: yet what reason had he to be disappointed? He had had no reason to suppose she was likely to be there, and he could not help owning to himself, no one but a brain-sick lover could have exalted a possibility only into a probability; till at last he could not help laughing at his own folly. But, better still—when the race began he also *forgot* it.

The sight was beautiful, and the anxiety of interested spectators catching. Henry soon had a favourite horse himself. First he learnt to be interested for "blue," another time for "purple:" till at last he found himself betting with strangers, and new hopes, fears, and feelings awakening in his breast; while in the stimulating pleasure of a race, he lost all sense of the probable cruelty attending the training, and the forced exertions of the animals before him.

Nor did the enjoyment cease to blind him while it lasted; and when on his return to the ordinary he dined with some of the joyous company from the ground, he could remember nought but that he was pleased, and that he looked forward to the next day's course with pleasure.

If his companions (who were all strangers to him) were not intellectual, they were harmless:—they, like himself, had only betted small sums. And the evening at the ball, though not delightful, (as Henry did not see his love there, whom in spite of his reason he still tried to discover,) had some charm for his unpractised eyes, and he went to rest eagerly anticipating the next day.

It came, and brought with it a trial to Henry; for a young man appeared at the inn and on the course, who had been fellow-clerk with him at Mr. Courtnay's, and who had expected to have

been taken into the firm before he was. But such had been his dissipated habits, his love of pleasure, and utter neglect of his duties, that when his father waited on Mr. Courtnay to propose the terms of his entering into business with him, the latter peremptorily refused to have any connexion with one who was wholly incapable of improving, or even of keeping up the interests of any trade, and very capable of decreasing and embarrassing it.

Neither the father nor the son ever forgave this just punishment of the vices of the latter: and when Henry Woodville, on the strength of his excellent conduct, was admitted into that firm whence David Bradford had been rejected, the latter as well as his father became the determined enemies of that more successful because more deserving youth; and so apt did Bradford always seem to quarrel with Henry, that, in com-

pliance with Mr. Courtnay's warning voice and his own principles, he made it a rule to avoid being long together where Bradford was. Therefore when he saw him on the race-ground, and found him determined to be near him, to provoke him to bet, and to enter into conversation with him—while his countenance expressed animosity, though he spoke in a tone of kindness; and when he reflected on the irritations of nerve and feeling which such a scene was likely to induce, he wisely resolved to avoid the danger, which if he met he could not perhaps be proof against; and before the last heat was begun, he not only left the race-ground, but the place itself, and mounting his horse went on to Abingdon, where the assizes were expected to begin in a day or two.

Though alone, Henry Woodville had not the feeling of being solitary; for he loved reading, and was ever fond of

communing with his own thoughts—as those who have vigorous and well-filled minds always are:—therefore, though disappointed of the companion who was to have accompanied him on this excursion, he had resolved not to give it up; and now that he had undertaken it, he still felt chearful and satisfied, though he found himself alone in a crowd in the streets, and at the principal inn of the busy town of Abingdon; and he beguiled the two evenings which were to elapse before the assizes began, in reading, and in writing to Mr. Courtnay and to his own family.

At length the judges entered the town, with a degree of state and solemnity worthy of the high and *awful* office (I may call it) which they had to fulfil; and Henry, while the trumpets and the bells announced their approach and their arrival, could not help thinking, with a sad sickness of the heart, on those to

whom those sounds, instead of opening a prospect of revelry and amusement, awakened the shudderings of alarm, the anticipation of agonizing suspense, and the fear of judgement and of death.

"I shall have no heart," thought he, "for the public amusements of the week; but I shall be deeply interested in attending the courts of justice." And he was so much interested, that on the first day of the assizes he was in court till the judges adjourned; and having returned thither when they did, he remained there till the business ended for the night. But a most painful surprise awaited him on his return to his inn. The landlord met him on his entrance, and told him, that as his house was otherwise quite full, he had taken the liberty of putting a gentleman (a new-comer) into the room through his; which, as it was no thoroughfare, had only a small

press-bed in it, and was never used but at such crowded times as the present.

Henry did not, could not like such an arrangement as this,—to have his chamber the only passage to the room of another, and that other a stranger to him;—but as he knew the other inn in the town was full, as he had vainly tried for a bed there, he had no resource but to submit.

"Well," replied he, "I am sorry that it is so—is the gentleman in the public room?"

"Oh no, sir; he is gone to bed: he was very tired, and he drank a good deal of our ale, sir. So he could not sit up till you came, which he was very sorry for, as he knows you quite well."

"Knows me!" cried Henry starting.

"Yes, sir; and he said you could have no objection to sleep near him. It was not the first time, for you were once fellow-clerks together."

Henry listened to this disclosure with the most painful uneasiness. Here was a man, whom he wished from the best possible motives to avoid, become as it were the companion of his chamber! Nor could he now dare to leave the house without giving Bradford a marked and personal offence.

"Well," thought he, "I must make up my mind to the circumstance, trying as it is; and keep steadily before me, come what come may, the necessary rule for conduct of Bear, and forbear."

He then with a heavy heart repaired to his chamber, the silence of which was now broken by the loud and restless slumber of Bradford, easily heard through the thin partition between the chambers, especially as the door that led to Bradford's bed-room did not shut close.

However, at last Henry closed his eyes, and slept till six; then he rose, dressed, had breakfasted, and had taken

a seat in the court before Bradford awoke.

Henry congratulated himself on having done this. But he had done wrong; as Bradford considered that he had acted thus purposely to avoid the necessity of breakfasting and associating with him: and Henry's enjoyment of the new pleasure before him,—that of hearing causes,—would have been wholly destroyed, had he known the deep displeasure which his early departure from the inn had excited in the vindictive Bradford.

When the court broke up, Henry returned to the inn to supper, and joined the company at the public table. It was not large, as many of those whom he had seen the night before were gone to the ball; but to the few remaining, Bradford was now added.

"Sir," said Bradford, when Henry had seated himself, "I think you might have had the civility to tell me you were

coming hither to the assizes, and then we might have come together. But I suppose, now you are the partner of the rich Mr. Courtnay, and hope to be his heir, you are too proud to associate with your old friends?"

"I should be sorry," Henry mildly replied, "to neglect any one; and I am much concerned to find you thought disrespectful, an omission which could not be intended as such. Do me the favour now, therefore, in token that you forgive me, to drink a glass of wine with me."

Bradford was at first reluctant to comply; but as he saw that the persons present, who seemed to be gentlemen, regarded him as if they thought he ought to accept Henry's offer, he filled his glass:—and for the present, all seemed right between them.

The day had been very hot, and the court had been crowded to suffocation: Henry therefore was led from excessive

thirst, and the persuasions of others, to drink more than he was accustomed to; and in the deceitful form of cup and negus, he was at length conscious that he had taken more wine than he could bear.

Bradford, in the meantime, whom disappointment and conscious self-degradation had led to habits of intoxication, began to grow very loud and positive in discourse, and evidently more and more disposed to quarrel with Henry; whose temper, fine as it was, grew every moment less able, from the unusual excitement of wine, to endure the coarse allusions of Bradford to " certain plausible hypocritical boys, who, by their seeming sanctity, get on the weak side of shallow men, and deprive honest unsuspecting young fellows of their bread and their rights."

The company could not understand these allusions, but Henry did, only too

well, and had wisely resolved to leave the room as soon as he could; when Bradford called the general attention to a bag of gold and silver which he produced, the greatest part of which he had won at the races, and emptied it on the table. Amongst the money he had put some curious foreign coins. But as the waiters were going to remove the cloth, Bradford was forced to replace all his treasure in the bag, and he did so before Henry had sufficiently examined the beauty of one of the coins.

Accordingly, when the cloth was taken away, and the waiters were setting the wine on the table, he begged Bradford to lend him the bag for a moment. He did so, saying at the same time, "Be sure you return them all; for I have told both the money and the coins, and know how many there are."

Henry did not condescend to notice

this coarse insinuation otherwise than by treating it as meant for a joke; and having selected the coin he wanted, he looked at it, and replacing it, returned the bag to the owner.

On which Bradford turned all the contents out on the table again: and after telling over the money and coins with a look of malignant suspicion, he declared that he missed a five-guinea piece; and he desired Henry to return it instantly, or he must submit to be searched.

"You cannot possibly mean what you say!" cried Henry, turning very pale; "you can't really think me capable of such an action as this, in earnest! and you know I am no joker: but if I were, you must know that you are the last man I should joke with."

"None of your plausible words to me, sir," replied Bradford; "I do not see why you should not have taken the money. A bankrupt father may as well

make a fraudulent son as a kept-miss daughter; and every body knows that your father was a bankrupt not long ago, and that your sister is the mistress of young Harcourt."

This was more than Henry could endure, and exclaiming, "Villain! you are a liar and a slanderer!" he aimed a blow at Bradford, who instantly drew his sword. —Henry did the same; and bloodshed must have ensued on the instant, had not the bystanders held the enraged combatants back; and as the waiters called in the landlord, who insisted that no such proceedings should go forward in his house, peace was for awhile restored. But as Henry persisted to demand an apology, and that Bradford should retract what he had said concerning his innocent sister, and as he persisted in repeating the calumny, declaring that he would tell every one Henry had robbed him, the gentlemen present were obliged, according to the

laws of worldly honour, to own that a duel between the parties was unavoidable; as the bitter resentment which Henry now expressed against Bradford was not only justifiable, but that the injury was one which, if not otherwise atoned for, could be wiped away only by the blood of the offender.

It was therefore agreed that they should meet the next day; but not early: because, though one of the gentlemen was willing to be second to Henry, every one of the others, on various pretences, declined being second to Bradford; and he found that he should be obliged to go a few miles off to engage the attendance of a friend and relation and bottle companion of his.

Bradford now continued to drink so largely that he was soon carried dead-drunk to bed; and Henry's repugnance to sleep in the same chamber with him, from fear lest he should renew the quar-

rel when they were alone, was therefore removed; as he was sure that Bradford would sleep till long after he was risen.

Therefore, as soon as the attendants had undressed and put their senseless charge to bed, he retired to rest; but not before he had been persuaded to drink another copious draught of powerful ale.

From the combined causes of heat, fatigue, agitation, and the unusual quantity of wine and ale which he had drunk, Henry fell into the deepest and soundest sleep possible, even as soon as he laid his head on the pillow, and the habitual but now heartless prayer died away unfinished on his lips.

Alas! it was the conviction how sound *would* be his sleep which emboldened the robber to enter the chamber in the dead of night, and to commit the crime of murder at the suggestions of avarice.

One of the waiters, whose name was Everett, was a man who had once belonged to a gang of housebreakers and thieves, but, struck with temporary remorse during a violent illness, had left his wicked courses; and after trying different employments, had been so fortunate as to get the place of waiter at an inn: and there he might perhaps have become a more respectable character, had he not formed a connexion with a very abandoned woman, whom he married; and who now, on pretence of her being ill and wanting his assistance, had insisted on his leaving his place and coming to her, with a view to his joining a gang of smugglers, with whom she was intimate, and going with them immediately on a cruize on board their cutter, which she thought would be good for her health.

Accordingly he had given warning to his master, and was to set off the next day for the place where his wife expected him.

But well knowing that he should be more welcome to her if he brought money with him, and also being aware that he could get on board ship immediately, he resolved to make prize of part if not all of that gold which Bradford had so ostentatiously displayed; and he thought he could do this with more security, because, Bradford having already accused Henry of having robbed him, his suspicions would undoubtedly fall on *him*; and he could, if Henry was sound asleep, (as he expected him to be,) put some of the money and coins in Henry's pocket.

Accordingly he entered the room, and found Henry unconscious as if in the sleep of death. On Henry's table lay a small diamond pin, the gift of his mother:—that Everett resolved to make his own; and for awhile pinned it on the bosom of his shirt. He then went to Bradford's bedside: but finding him less soundly asleep than he expected, and

also finding that his head lay on his pockets, he saw no certainty of securing his prize, but by adding murder to robbery. He therefore drew *Henry's sword* from his scabbard, and made a blow with it at the yet sleeping Bradford. But though it wounded it did not kill, and it awoke him immediately so much as to enable him to struggle with the villain for one moment:—but in vain; the next stroke was fatal; and Bradford fell back on his pillow, a bleeding and insensible corpse. Everett then went back into Henry's room, and replaced the bloody sword in the scabbard.

At this moment, just as Everett had completed his purpose, and was returning to take possession of the money, Henry became restless and talked in his sleep; which alarmed Everett so much that he dared not stay a moment longer in either room, but returned to his own; where, having washed himself and burnt to ashes

all his linen that was bloody, he resolved to wait till he thought Henry was once more sound asleep. But on his re-entering the chamber, Henry, to his great alarm, cried out, "Who's there?" and he was glad to retreat: nor could he find an opportunity of ever entering the room again; for he heard Henry walking about soon after, and found by the noise he made, that he was dressing himself.

Thus then had he burthened his soul with the commission of murder without any recompense whatever. Nor dared he leave the house under such circumstances, as that would appear a suspicious proceeding; and with a sinking heart, though with an assured countenance, Everett dressed himself, and joined his fellow servants.

When Henry awoke from his first deep sleep, he awoke to sleep no more that night; for with returning conscious-

ness came the horrible recollection of the engagement he had made, to do an act which his own principles, both moral and religious, utterly condemned; namely, at the risk of his own life and that of his parents' peace, raise his arm against the existence of a fellow creature!

To a virtuous young man and an obedient pious child like Henry, such a recollection was insupportable; and it was not long before he began to consider whether it was or was not too late to draw back from the precipice on which he stood.

Nor did he deliberate in vain; for soon not only "consideration like an angel came, and whipped the offending spirit out of him," but salutary fear of God conquered the unworthy fear of man and of man's censure; and he almost positively resolved to quit Berkshire instantly, and to leave a letter for Bradford and for his own second, explaining his

reasons for not fighting; and declaring his resolution, if Bradford persisted in his calumnies and his violence, to seek redress in a court of law.

Still he could not prevail on himself to do what his conscience required. Still pride, and even a virtuous resentment, withheld their approbation of the meditated step; and he was sitting irresolute still, (though his trunk was nearly packed, and he himself dressed all but his sword,) when the door opened, and a waiter appeared at it.

"What did you want?" said Henry.

"I am come to awake Mr. Bradford, sir, by his own desire, at five o'clock."

"Is it so late?" replied Henry.—"But be so good as not to awake Mr. Bradford yet," he added in great agitation, "I have a reason for it."

"Indeed I must, sir," replied the man, with a look of suspicion; "for he is

a violent gentleman, and he would be angry."

"No matter; oblige me, and here is money for you," said Henry, who feared to have any communication with Bradford till his mind was made up how to act.

"I will have none of your money, sir," returned the man indignantly; for at this moment, glancing his eye towards the sword which lay on Henry's chair, he saw the hilt was bloody, and that there was blood on the floor by it.

As soon therefore as he had uttered these words he ran past the astonished Henry, and entered Bradford's chamber. At sight of the scene before him, the man uttered an exclamation of horror, which made Henry follow him. But as he intercepted Henry's view of the corpse, he exclaimed "What is the matter?"

On hearing his voice, the waiter turn-

ed round—"Do *you* ask what is the matter?" said he; "Wretch! hypocrite!" So saying, he ran to the door of Henry's room, in spite of his detaining arm, took the key which was inside; and then locking Henry in, went down stairs, crying "Murder!"

Amazement, speechless amazement, now took possession of Henry; which was succeeded by horror and agony as great, when on looking towards the bed, on returning into the room from his vain pursuit of the waiter, he beheld Bradford stiff and bleeding, and saw by his countenance that he was dead, either by his own hand or that of an assassin.

Surprise, pity, and consternation at once assailed and overwhelmed him; and he staggered against the wall, nearly as insensible as the bloody corse before him: while at first no fear or consideration for himself mingled with his feelings for

Bradford. But short was the disinterested agony. The waiter's singular manner, both of speaking and acting, in one alarming moment recurred to his mind, and convinced him that the suspicion of having murdered the wretched Bradford must indubitably fall on *him*. And he stood pale and motionless, the image of despair, with his eyes wildly fixed on the unconscious object before him, when he heard the door unlocked, and saw every inhabitant of the inn rushing into the apartment in disorder and alarm.

The scene needed no explanation—it explained itself. On the bed in the inner room lay the bleeding and now cold body of Bradford; by the side of it stood Henry, overwhelmed with such agony as could be easily mistaken for the agony of guilt: while the landlord seized the sword of Henry Wood-

ville, and drawing it from the scabbard, held it up to view, stained to the very hilt with blood.

"*My* sword!" cried Henry, roused by this painful sight; "and was it done with *my* sword too? Then I am a lost man indeed!" And leaning against the wall, he hid his face with his hands.

It was found also that Bradford had *not been robbed!* And one of the gentlemen with whom he and Bradford had supped, now stooped down and took up something which glittered on the floor, and it proved to be Henry's shirt-pin, the beauty of which he had admired the preceding night. The head of this pin had been broken off in Bradford's short struggle with Everett; who, as I before stated, had pinned it on his shirt; and it now served (with the circumstance of there being no robbery) as an additional proof against the innocent Henry.

"Alas!" cried the gentleman, hold-

it up to Henry, who had now uncovered his face; "Unhappy young man, look! what an evidence is this against you!"

Henry did look—recognised his once dear ornament (the gift of his mother on his birth-day); and turning away he groaned aloud, but said nothing then. But when the coroner was come, and the inquest entered upon, he solemnly called on his Maker to witness his entire innocence of the murder, strong as he must own appearances to be against him.

These terrible events had succeeded each other with such excessive rapidity, that Henry felt too much bewildered, and his feelings were too much obtunded, for him to take in as yet the danger, the misery, and the necessities of his situation. But when, in consequence of the strong circumstantial evidence against him, he was committed to prison as the supposed murderer of Bradford, he was roused to the

full horrors of his almost hopeless condition: but then he recollected, with some comfort, that his friend and partner was only a day's journey from him; and he was sure that he would not only hasten to him immediately, but would break the sad tidings to his beloved family.

Accordingly he begged to be allowed to write to him; and having done so, stating his entire innocence, and his confidence that Mr. Courtnay would *believe* him innocent, he felt more easy, and resigned himself with confidence to the will and the protection of that Being who "judgeth not as man judgeth."

I will not attempt to describe the feelings of Henry when the night closed in on him in the cell of his prison, and he saw himself chained, confined, and abhorred as a murderer, though innocent of even any intentional crime, except as far as having intended to meet the poor

murdered Bradford in mortal combat could be deserving of the name.

But the bitterest of all agony, and that consciousness on which he could not even bear to dwell,—for there was madness in it,—was the thought of what his parents, his family, and his friend would endure. "However, I have the comfort of knowing they will not for a moment believe me guilty," said he mentally. He then betook himself to long and ardent prayer, and fell into refreshing sleep.

Very different at the time of Henry's commitment were the feelings of his beloved parents to those of their unhappy son; for the day, the long-expected day was now drawing near, when their debt of honour (as I may call it) was about to be discharged in full, and they were to appear in all their proud and high-minded integrity.

At length the day of the projected

dinner actually arrived; and every one who had suffered in the slightest degree by the bankruptcy of Mr. Woodville, repaired to his house at the appointed hour, little suspecting what was to await them there.

An invitation to dine where for some time past no dinners had been given, might perhaps excite surprise in all; and as a spiteful and detracting spirit is only too common, some of the invited began to fear that the Woodvilles were going *to live away again*, and had forgotten they had only paid fifteen shillings in the pound.

To such I am sure that the cause of that dinner would give at least as much mortification to their feelings as gratification to their pecuniary interest; and perhaps the sorrow of the Woodvilles, which trod so closely on the heels of their proud but virtuous triumph, was not as unwelcome to such persons as

Christian benevolence required that it should be.

The guests were assembled and the dinner served; while an ill-suppressed sob of strong and pleasurable emotion occasionally proved the deep interest which Mr. Woodville felt in the anticipation of what was to come: and while he looked at one or two of his guests, to whom he knew an unexpected sum of money would then be particularly welcome, his benevolent breast glowed with pleasure, at the thought that he was about to gladden the hearts of those, who in his adversity had done all in their power to gladden his.

One gentleman whom he had invited did not come till the dessert was on the table, and just before Mr. Woodville, with a beating heart, was about to exhibit the canvass bags containing specie, and (where the sum owing was large,) a draft on his banker to the amount of

each individual debt;—and when this gentleman did arrive, his cheek was so pale, and his manner so agitated and strange, that he excited considerable attention mixed with alarm, in the rest of the company.

But Mr. Woodville was less alive to his singularity than his guests, as he and his wife and daughter also were too full of their own agitation to be aware of his.

At length in an unsteady voice Mr. Woodville addressed his guests; and having made known to them the purpose of his invitation, he gave to each the bag containing the sum, with interest, which for his sake they had been so willing to relinquish. But though all seemed affected as well as gratified by this unexpected and welcome circumstance, the gentleman who had last entered, whose name was Adderly, was so much overcome, that he rose from table and turned

to the window, to hide his emotion, which was ungovernable, when Woodville declared that that was the proudest and happiest day of his life!

He then with a faltering voice and a shaking hand filled out a bumper for himself, and hoped a father's partiality might be excused, if he gave as a toast his son—Henry Woodville—who had denied himself the gratifications his present income afforded him, in order that he might enable his father sooner to discharge his debts, and resume his own usual mode of living. "And allow me to add," he said, "to my toast, my earnest wishes that you may all be blest with such a son as mine!"

Mr. Adderly now took his glass in his hand, struggling evidently for composure. But he had no sooner put the wine to his lips, than he set it down, and bursting into tears, said, "I cannot swallow it—it would choke me—it would

indeed." Then leaning his head on the table he sobbed aloud.

Mrs. Woodville's *mother's heart* now took the alarm; and rising from her seat, she conjured him with clasped hands to explain the cause of this singular emotion, and to tell them if any harm had befallen their precious child Henry.

Mr. Adderly did not immediately reply, for he could not: but taking a newspaper from his pocket, which he had received just as he was coming to the dinner, he gave it into the hand of young Harcourt, the lover of Elizabeth; who having read it, with a cheek pale as death begged to speak to Mr. Woodville alone. "Nay," cried the mother and sister wildly, "we will go too." And in sorrowful suspense they followed where he led.

The paper contained a narrative of the whole distressing affair. And that family who hailed the dawn of that day

with thankfulness, pride, and joy, now saw it close in agony, terror, and almost despair.

It was indeed some little comfort to them, to hear from their guests the strongest assurances that no one could believe Henry Woodville guilty. And when the unhappy father set off, as he did instantly, on his road to his son, he was surrounded, as he entered the chaise, by crowds of kind and anxious friends, some offering services, all expressing sympathy, and vociferating earnest wishes for Henry's ultimate triumph.

But still the way was long and mournful to the anxious parent, though accompanied by a neighbour and friend;—and heavily indeed the moments passed to that tender mother and affectionate sister, who, though forbidden by Woodville to accompany him, and consigned by him to the care of Harcourt, murmured for the first time at the will of this kindest

of fathers and of husbands, and fancied they should feel less if allowed to be at the scene of trial itself.

But to return to Henry.—Nothing now but this sad event was talked of in the houses, the courts of justice, and the streets of Abingdon. The causes then pending, however interesting, interested no longer; but the public mind was wholly fixed on this, which was to come on at the end of the week, and with which the assizes were to conclude: and, as is only too usual on such occasions, the unhappy Henry was prejudged, and he was pronounced *certainly guilty*, before the merits of the case had been heard in a court of justice.

Even those gentlemen who had witnessed the brutal conduct of Bradford, and had admired the mild but manly forbearance of Henry, were now so melted to pity by the wretched fate of the former, that they were disposed to consider

Henry's conduct as consummate art: and as one of them (he who was to have been his second in the duel) now remembered that Bradford expressed himself with great bitterness against "canting, plausible, hypocritical boys, who got on the weak side of shallow men, and deprived honest unsuspecting young fellows of their rights and their bread;" this gentleman now concluded that Bradford was speaking *at Henry*. In short, in proportion as they had thought well of him, they now thought ill, and attributed Bradford's brutal conduct to the excessive ill-usage which he had received from the specious Henry.

The most material evidence against him was Tomms the waiter who came to call Bradford:—but Everett also had been examined by the coroner; and having fortified himself by a very large dose of brandy, he was able to bear witness with others to a quarrel at table between

Bradford and Henry Woodville; and he did it with a degree of firmness which astonished himself: but he was not pleased to find that he could not be allowed to leave the place, till he had repeated his evidence in a court of justice.

When Henry awoke the next day, and remembered that he had as yet no friend to advise with, he felt it a duty which he owed his own innocence and his family, to do all he could for himself; and he desired to see, as soon as possible, the first attorney in the town and the first lawyer on the circuit. This gentleman was unfortunately already engaged by the attorney employed for the prosecution. However, the second in public esteem was at liberty, and he came to Henry's cell before he went into court.

There was something so open and so captivating in Henry Woodville's manner; his countenance was so beautiful and so prepossessing, and his voice so

persuasive, that, as soon as he saw him, Sergeant Murray could not believe he beheld a man capable of murder; and he was inclined to think, that if he had killed Bradford it was in self-defence.

Nor was his prepossession in Henry's favour at all diminished when he heard his simple narrative of his past life; of his circumstances; of his father's situation; of those of his family; and of his own habits and prospects down to the fatal night in question: nor when he witnessed those bursts of agonizing tenderness which were wrung from him, not by his own sufferings, but by the consciousness of those which his situation and danger would inflict on his parents and his family.

"I know not how to think you guilty for a moment," said the sergeant in a faltering voice; "still I must own the circumstantial evidence is unusually strong against you; and could the by-standers

prove that you were as drunk as Bradford when you went to bed, or could they prove that you had liquor after you were in your room, I should really imagine that you killed this unhappy man in the delirium of drunkenness, and have forgotten the circumstance entirely."

"But these facts, of drinking and of being drunk, no one can prove," replied Henry, "because they never took place. I walked up to bed as usual, and took nothing after I got into my own room: but I shall ever bitterly lament, to the close of my now, perhaps, short existence, that through the whole of the evening I allowed myself to be persuaded to drink more than temperance and my own ideas of right warranted, and that I drank so much ale before I went up to bed; for, had I been as temperate as usual, I could not have slept sound enough to admit of any one's entering the room, and removing

my sword from my bedside. There is no doubt but that he who murdered poor Bradford meant to steal my pin, but dropped it in the bloody scuffle: I conclude that he was disturbed before he could take the money, and forced to retreat suddenly. I remember too, that some one seemed to me to open my door at about three in the morning, and on my calling out 'Who is there?' retreated again: now I suspect that this intruder was the murderer coming back for his spoil;—but then *who was he?*"

The sergeant agreed with Henry in this opinion, but to the Who was he? it was impossible to reply satisfactorily. It might be the landlord, or it might be one of the waiters. However, I may say, the suspicions both of Henry and the sergeant fell on Tomms, who first declared his suspicions of Henry: and these suspicions determined the sergeant to watch and cross-

examine this man on the trial with the most laudable and minute exactness and ability.

While Henry's manners and conversation were thus prejudicing Sergeant Murray in his favour, and convincing him of his entire innocence, a very different impression was making on the mind of Sergeant Rickwood, the counsel against them, by the brother and wretched father of the murdered Bradford.

Bradford had in many instances been a trial, and any thing but a comfort, to his father: still, when he saw him cut off in the prime of his days and the fullness of his errors, and lying a murdered victim on his bed of death—the unhappy parent remembered only that he was his child, and that the wretched youth could offend, and he forgive, no more! His other son, John Bradford, felt little grief for his brother's loss, but great indignation against his murderer; and firmly believ-

ing the hated and envied Henry Woodville was that murderer; (hated and envied by all the Bradfords, because he was universally beloved and more prosperous in life than they were,) he resolved to leave no means untried to convict Henry of the murder, and to bring the sentence of the law upon him.

No wonder then that Sergeant Rickwood's mind was poisoned by his clients against Henry Woodville, and even against his family; and that he believed,—for such was the representation of the Bradfords,—that Mr. Courtnay was a weak man, who had been led on by the artifices and falsehoods of the Woodvilles to think ill of his unhappy victim, and to take Henry into partnership to his prejudice.

Poor Henry was much disappointed at receiving no visit, nor even an answer, from Mr. Courtnay till the fourth day after he had written to him; but then he

was repaid for his anxious suspense by the contents of the letter, which then reached him. Mr. Courtnay told him that he was a hundred and fifty miles on the other side of London when he received his letter, and that he had set off for town on the receipt of it as soon as he possibly could; that he could as soon doubt of his innocence as of his own, and that he would be with him the next day. He added, "I sent off an express directly to your father, who will, no doubt, be with you soon after me;—in the meanwhile keep up your spirits, my dearest Henry."

Oh! pleasant indeed was this letter, and the prospect of seeing its benevolent writer, to the soul of the sufferer: and though he knew that Mr. Courtnay's testimony to his character could weigh but little against the force of evidence, still he felt that it would be a consolation to him to hear him give it.

He did not look forward with such joy to seeing his beloved father; as he dreaded to witness his parental agonies, dreaded for himself the terrible pang of knowing that he, who had once been his parents' pride, was now, however innocently, about perhaps to become their disgrace.

"Well," said he to himself in the solitude of his prison, "how happy am I in the midst of my misery, to reflect that Anna Vincent knows me not, and that my hard fate can never afflict or wound the woman whom I love! It is quite a sufficient trial to know how much I am fated to afflict my parents, relations, and friends."

Mr. Courtnay arrived the next day early in the morning, having travelled all night. The meeting between Henry and him can easily be imagined. But the hope of a favourable issue, with which Courtnay had entered the prison, was soon damped by an interview which he had

with Henry's counsel and attorney, who not only felt the evidence to be of a very undeniable nature, but also knew that the minds of every one were prejudiced against the innocent accused. Fain would they therefore have put off the trial; but they found it was impossible: and the awful day, big with the fate of Henry Woodville, at length arrived*.

* Till now I had always believed that there was a law against trying any person for murder while the fact was recent, and the minds of the public inflamed against the criminal; and that this law was passed in consequence of the following circumstances, on which this tale was founded. But I find I was mistaken; and that judges are not forbidden by law, however they may be induced by humanity, to forbear to try any one *immediately* for a murder committed during the assizes then holding.

In the year 1684, two days before the assizes for the town and county of Norwich were over, Mr. Thomas Berney, son of Sir Thomas Berney of Norwich, and his friend Mr. Bennefield, another young man, (the son of a country gentleman, I believe,) were in the evening at a tavern, drinking

The court was crowded at a very early hour; and even ladies were led (as they believed) by indignation against the *crime*, to bear to listen to the trial, and perhaps to the condemnation of the *criminal:* nor once, perchance, did it come across their minds, as they sat expecting the appearance of the prisoner, to suspect

with one De Havers, a French dancing-master. About midnight, these gentlemen and this De Havers having "their heads inflamed with wine," a quarrel arose between Bennefield and De Havers; when De Havers, taking advantage of Berney's senseless state of intoxication, took an opportunity to draw Berney's sword from his side, and stabbed Bennefield to the heart. He then returned the bloody sword into Berney's scabbard:—"he (says the authority from which I quote) not having any sense in him to discern this wicked and cursed villain's cunning contrivance against his life."

Mr. Berney went home to his house, not knowing that his sword was bloody, "nor thinking any thing in the least of this barbarous murder;" but while he was in bed and asleep, an officer of justice came with a warrant to apprehend him for the murd r of his friend, of whose death even, he was

that they were not led thither in reality by any virtuous abhorrence of guilt, but merely by *curiosity* and the love of *strong excitement*.

But all this boasted indignation (which was only too general amongst the persons present and in the town of A.) subsided almost unconsciously, when Henry, accompanied by his friend Mr. Courtnay,

wholly ignorant. However, he was put on his trial; and as there were no witnesses of the murder, the bloody sword was the only evidence which could possibly be adduced; and on that evidence alone, this innocent young man was found guilty, and executed in the Town Close of Norwich.

Many petitions in Mr. Berney's favour were presented to the king (Charles the Second): but as Mr. Berney was of a family devoted to the Stuarts, the petitions against the prisoner were attended to, and the others rejected.

De Havers in the meanwhile fled to France; and being there reduced to the extreme of misery and want, he on his death-bed confessed himself to be the sole murderer of Mr. Bennefield, and bore a late but sure testimony to the innocence of Mr. Berney.

appeared in court, and took his seat at the bar.

His youthful appearance, his uncommon beauty both of face and person, the sweetness of his countenance, which not even his trying situation could obscure; and the calm yet manly resignation of his manner, had such an instantaneous effect on every one present, that indignation against the crime was forgotten in admiration of the supposed criminal; and when he replied "Not guilty," according to the usual form, he uttered the words in a voice so touching, and in a manner so assured, yet so unpresuming, that many a bosom heaved with pity and alarm for him, which had before beaten with anger at his name; and many a one wished to hear him proved innocent, who entered the court earnestly desiring to hear him pronounced guilty.

The wise and eloquent man who had to plead against him, soon discovered the

favourable impression which the appearance of the prisoner had made on the court, and he drew from this circumstance fresh fuel for the fire of his eloquence; as it enabled him to warn the jury against being influenced by those uncommon fascinations of feature, countenance, and manner, which the prisoner certainly possessed, and which he was conscious would have impressed him only too powerfully in his favour, had not facts, too stubborn not to be all powerful with his lawyer's experience, strengthened him unassailably against the prepossessing appearance which he beheld, and acknowledged himself.

The circumstances which he had to detail were indeed strong ones. The previous quarrel; the intention to fight the next day; the provoking accusations brought by the deceased against the prisoner, which (as the gentlemen present owned) nothing but his blood could wipe

away; the evident agitation (as he should prove) of the prisoner, when the waiter came at five o'clock to call the deceased; his being up at that hour, ready dressed, and his trunk packed up for going away; his offer to bribe the waiter to delay calling the deceased; and lastly, his sword stained to the very hilt in blood, and his diamond pin found by the bedside of the murdered man, and broken evidently in the bloody struggle; together with the absolute improbability that any one else had done it, as no traces or sign of blood had been found in any other apartment, or on any person; besides the fact of no robbery having been committed:—all these things, the sergeant said, made such a chain of incontrovertible evidence against the prisoner, as his experience had never furnished him with before.

This gentleman had a peculiar power, like Mr. Erskine (now Lord Erskine), in these days, of seeming to identify him-

self with the person for whom he was pleading. It was impossible almost not to believe that his client was not a part of himself; so powerfully did his feelings seem to be interested in what he said; so undoubtedly did his own happiness, if not his own life, seem to hang on the verdict of the jury whom he addressed; while "the grace of action, the adapted mien," which distinguished the great modern orator whom I have named above, were also possessed by the gentleman in question, and proved a strong counterbalance to the interest excited by the interesting Henry Woodville. Nay, Henry himself could not help admiring the beauty of the axe which was thus laid to the root of his life; and was forced to forgo the admiration which the talent of eloquence had previously and recently excited in him, when he thus heard how capable it was of bringing down destruction even on an innocent man.

The sergeant having ended his speech, called his witnesses; one of whom was Everett, who had taken care to hurt his eye, in order to have a pretence for hiding his conscious countenance by a green shade; and by affecting a violent cold, he gave himself a pretence to speak hoarse and inaudibly. By brandy and opium he had wound up his nerves to bear the short period of his examination: and as Sergeant Murray was, unfortunately, so prepossessed with the guilt of Tomms, that he did not much cross-examine Everett, whose evidence was simply, that he witnessed the quarrel of the prisoner and the deceased; he was soon dismissed and at liberty to leave the town even whenever he pleased:—and he did leave it instantly.

The cross-examination of Tomms did great credit to Sergeant Murray's acuteness: but as the man was firm in conscious truth, his evidence was in no way

shaken, nor could his innocence be impeached in the slightest degree.

All therefore that Sergeant Murray could do for his client in reply, was to descant on the little probability that a being so amiable, as he could prove the prisoner to be by incontrovertible testimony, could have been guilty of the crime imputed to him. While he was speaking, a note was handed to the prisoner, who having read it, leaned, quite overpowered, on the shoulder of Mr. Courtnay.

Sergeant Murray paused, and begged to read the note. It was handed to him; and as it produced emotion in him, he begged to read it aloud. But the counsel on the other side clamorously contended against it; and declared it not admissible to read any thing of the sort in that stage of the business, and certainly nothing likely to influence the judgement of the jury through their feelings. However, as

Sergeant Murray persisted to read it, and the note was but short, Sergeant Rickwood consented, saying, that was he not sure of a verdict from the evidence he had brought forward, he would not have allowed it.

The note was from Henry's father to his son, and was as follows:

"I am here, my dear and innocent child; and I want to know whether my presence, the presence of a father, whose pride and pleasure you have always been, and still will be, (for I know you will behave as you ought in this trial of your resignation and your fortitude,) would be a comfort and support to you; if so, I will come to you instantly."

There was a murmur of pity and emotion heard throughout the court when the sergeant ceased to read; and the judge broke the sort of silence which succeeded, by asking Henry if he wished his father should come in; but he answered in the

negative, and the sergeant resumed his speech; while Mr. Courtnay went out to speak to the anxious parent.

Sergeant Murray, emboldened by the permission he had obtained to read the note, now begged leave to read a letter, which would exhibit the character both of the father and the son in their true light.

This was a letter from Woodville senior to Henry, which he received just after he was imprisoned; in which he told him that he at length was able to pay his creditors all he owed them, with interest; and that he had invited them to dine with him on such a day. The good man went on to describe the exquisite joy which he should experience at that moment, which would be heightened to him by the consciousness that the filial piety of his son, proved by the savings which he had forced his father to accept, had enabled him so to act sooner than

he could otherwise have done; and had thus hastened the moment of this great relief to his mind, and this restoration to complete happiness. But as a letter was not admissible evidence, any more than the note, and as it was much longer, the sergeant was forbidden to read a word of it. He persisted, however, to give the substance of the letter, and then called Mr. Courtnay as witness to the character of Henry. This attached and amiable friend of Henry and his family was so affected when he rose to speak, that he could not utter a word for some minutes; but when he did, his words were as eloquent as his silence had been. Another witness to the same effect was now called—a young friend of Henry's; and he was unexpectedly succeeded by several others; all eager to bear their testimony in behalf of the virtue of their exemplary and beloved companion.

These young men had voluntarily set off from London, and other places, as soon as they heard of Henry's situation; and now with glistening eyes and faltering voices rose, almost clamorously, to demand to be put to their oath and heard.

"Gentlemen of the jury," said Sergeant Murray,—his own eyes glistening, and his own voice faltering after he had examined these witnesses, (and the counsel on the opposite had, for form's sake, cross-examined them,)—"here I end my defence."

Sergeant Rickwood now rose in reply, though evidently with less ardour than he had shown in his opening speech. But he strongly enforced the necessity there was for the jury to be decided in their verdict by *facts* alone, and not by *feelings*; and with consummate skill he contrived to recapitulate those facts which most tended to criminate the pri-

soner; and to insinuate that the almost perfect virtue attributed to the prisoner by his friends, seemed so much beyond the reach of nature, that it served to confirm the idea of his being the artful and plausible character which the poor deceased reproached him with being.

This remark occasioned so loud a murmur of disapprobation that the judge was forced to desire silence in the court; and Sergeant Rickwood sat down, consoled under this marked censure by the consciousness that he had only done his duty.

The judge now summed up the evidence, and delivered his charge to the jury.

He did not speak long; nor did the jury deliberate long. Contrary to the general *expectation*; contrary now, also, to the *general hope*, was the verdict which the foreman pronounced,—for that verdict was a verdict of GUILTY.

An affecting silence now took place in the court, interrupted only by the ill-concerted murmurs of Henry's friends.

Henry alone, though very pale, was calm and unmoved; and replied to the usual question—"Whether he had any thing to say why judgement should not be passed on him"—in the following manner:—

"I can only say that sentence should not be passed, because I am as innocent as any one present of the crime imputed to me. But I feel that appearances are so strong against me, that I forgive the mistaken verdict which I have just heard; and own that had I been one of the jurors, I might have so decided myself. However, I trust that one day the real murderer will be discovered; and in the mean while I bless God that I die innocent, rather than guilty."

When Henry had done speaking, the judge paused before he pronounced sentence, in strong emotion, and the few ladies and women who yet remained in court took that opportunity to hasten from it.

Mr. Courtnay did not hear the awful and terrible words, for he was led out before the judge began.

Henry was now told he might withdraw: but at thoughts of leaving the court all his firmness forsook him, for he knew he had now to meet his agonized parent. But the trial must be gone through with; and he endeavoured to compose his own spirits, in order that he might assist his father to keep up his.

The wretched parent was, he found, when he entered the passage that led to his cell, supporting himself against the shoulder of Mr. Courtnay. But on hear-

ing the sound of irons he started, and turning round beheld that it was his child who wore them! Then precipitating himself into the arms of Henry, he fainted on his bosom: nor did he recover till he was laid on Henry's bed, and found Courtnay and his son hanging anxiously over him.

I will not describe the scene that followed; I will only say, that the father and son tried to console each other with the consciousness that it was better for Henry to die innocent than guilty; and they flattered themselves that they believed and were comforted by what they said.

As the trial took place on a Saturday, Henry had two whole days of preparation, and the Sunday was passed by him in the way most becoming his situation, and most calculated to soothe his parting spirit.

But at length the trial which he most

dreaded came;—the bidding farewell, first to Mr. Courtnay and next to his father. And when he was left alone with the latter, they both felt how incompetent any consideration was to soften, to such a child and such a parent, the agonies of that moment.

Force alone, necessary force, exerted by the jailor, could at last tear the parent from the arms of his child: and when Henry heard the grated door shut out that revered and beloved being for ever from his view, he threw himself in almost frantic violence on his bed, and wished to lose in madness the bitter sense of suffering. But oh! how he rejoiced that his father had not allowed his mother and his sister to accompany him to Abingdon! for how could he have borne to have witnessed that tender mother's agonies, and the grief of that dear sister, the playfellow of his childhood and the dearest

friend of his riper years! Fortunately he forgot that it was only too certain that his disgraceful death would deprive his sister of a lover as well as a brother; as it was impossible her lover's father, Mr. Harcourt, should allow his son to marry the sister of a man who had perished on a scaffold.

I have before said that the unhappy father was taken by force from the arms of his son, and that that force was exerted by the jailor; but tears were in his eyes as he did it; and when he consigned the nearly phrensied parent to the care of his son's young friends, who waited to receive him, he wrung his hand, and bade him be comforted, in a voice of such deep feeling and emotion, that the young men heard him with surprise and admiration, and wondered that a jailor could still retain so much real humanity. They knew not that it was one unhappy father sympathizing with another:—

they knew not that the jailor himself had had a son condemned to death for a robbery that morning, though no one suspected the youth to be his son; and that in the sorrows of Mr. Woodville he commiserated his own.

Henry had refused the offer both of his friend Courtnay and of his father to attend him to his execution; as he knew that the sight of his father's agony would have considerably increased the bitterness of death, and have utterly destroyed that composure which he wished to maintain at the moment of trial. Therefore, as they could no longer be of any use or comfort to him, he wished them to leave the town before the fatal event took place.

But that they refused to do.—There was yet a duty to fulfil, in the performance of which they expected to find a mournful consolation. They staid to gaze on the cold remains of him whom they so

tenderly loved; and to honour him in, the eyes of the world, by all the duties which faithful affection could pay, whom the sentence of the law had, in the eyes of the world, disgraced.

"The innocent victim shall have a handsome funeral, at least," cried Mr. Courtnay.

Nor did they fear to be interrupted in the solemn duty by any insults from the populace: for so changeable is popular feeling, that the very crowds who followed poor Bradford to the grave, with every possible demonstration of pity for him, and with loud execrations of his murderer, were now prepared to follow with even greater compassion and greater regret, the unhappy youth whom the verdict of a jury had declared to be that murderer: and when the sentence of the law had pronounced him guilty, their ever-vacillating feelings proclaimed him

to be innocent;—and even the words of "Rescue!" and "Let's save him!" were heard amongst the crowd assembling to behold the execution.

But to return to Henry.—When the first paroxysm of his grief after he had taken his last leave of his father had subsided, he sat down to the tender task he had enjoined himself.

This was to bequeath to his mother, sister, and early friends, some few tokens of remembrance, and to write to the two former a farewell letter, to prove to them that they and his father were the last earthly objects on whom his thoughts at that awful moment reposed; and to assure them that they would be remembered by him in his last prayers, before the fatal signal was given.

Having performed this duty, and commended himself to his God, he undressed himself and went to bed, and soon fell

into a sleep as calm and as refreshing as he ever knew in the days of his happiness.

He had slept two hours, when just as the clock struck twelve he was awakened by the opening of the door of his cell, and starting up he saw with a beating heart that it opened to admit the jailor.

"Is it possible," cried Henry mournfully, "that it can be day already? and that the terrible moment is so very near?"

"Quiet yourself," replied the jailor in a low voice: "It is only twelve o'clock at night, and I am come to save you!"

"To save me!"

"Yes:—but be quick and dress yourself—Stay, let me take off your irons first." And while he spoke, the bewildered Henry felt his fetters removed, doubting whether he was not in a pleasing dream.

"Here, take your clothes and dress directly, I tell you," continued the jailor. "You must know that my son, a wild one to be sure—but after all that, he is my son, you know—was condemned to be hanged to-morrow with you for a highway robbery: but nobody knew he was my son; else, you know, he would not have been let to remain under the custody of his poor fond father. Well, the long and the short of it is, that either he must die, or I set him free and go along with him, and share his fortunes, and try to make a better boy of him if I can. I shall write a bit of a letter to leave behind, to tell the folks the rights of the business: and fathers will, no doubt, be not much inclined to blame one, as a child is one's own flesh and blood, you know:—and fathers feel for fathers, you know;—and that's the reason I am come to take you off along with us; for some-

how I could not bear to see the poor gentleman, your good father, take on as he did; and so I swore an oath to myself, that if I saved my son I would save his too—and now I have said my say."

Henry could not reply; but he grasped his hand in silence. His mind was fully made up as to the propriety of his accepting the offer; and even if it had not been so, that love of life, which nothing but excessive misery can subdue, now throbbed so violently in his breast, that fly he must, at all risks, from the unjust fate which awaited him.

The jailor now produced a dark juice, with which he dyed Henry's fair face; and having blacked his eyebrows and his chin, he put him on a dark-coloured head of hair, and then left him, to go for his son.

In another half hour they were safe out of the prison walls, and on their road to

London; the jailor having deposited the keys of the prison and his letter (done up in a parcel) at the door of the post-office, directed to the governor of the prison.

When they were completely out in the country, the jailor and his son (whose faces were both dyed as Henry's was) gave a loud whistle, which was immediately answered by another; and soon after a man and woman appeared, accomplices of the young man's, who gave them a bundle containing disguises for all three.

As Henry, though well made, was by no means tall, they put a woman's dress on him; and with a basket on his arm and a pipe in his mouth, he looked like a sort of woman who follows a camp, or like a travelling gipsy; and the men not only looked like gipsy men, but the young one was no mean proficient in the gipsy language. The clothes in which they

had left the prison they put into a sort of wallet, the jailor slung them over his shoulder, and then they resumed their journey.

When the day was so far advanced that the business of life seemed every where re-commencing around them, they thought it expedient to retire from the road, and, like gipsies, sit down and burn their sticks, and cook their dinner; as their friends whom they had met, had provided them with every thing necessary: and by thus assuming the appearance and manner of gipsies, they got safe to London, and to one of the young man's haunts there, at the end of the third day: while Henry fervently returned thanks to Heaven for his escape from death, and was grateful for life, even though obliged to pass one night in a place of rendezvous for housebreakers and highwaymen.

But the next morning the considerate

jailor came to his bedside to advise with him what it was best for him to do. "I know," said he, "this is no scene for such as you—it is quite too bad for me. But I must stay here for safety at present; and after the hue and cry is over, I hope to get into some honest way myself; though I fear," added he, wiping his eyes, "I can never get my poor boy from his bad ways."

"My kind friend," replied Henry, "while I and my father or Mr. Courtnay live, you may command our services. But at present I, as well as you, must be secret in all that we do, and not be seen together. I have no doubt but that the real murderer will one day be discovered, and then I shall be able to appear again: and till then, how can I conceal myself?"

"By this time, no doubt, as your father and Mr. Courtnay know of your escape, they are both, I dare say, come or coming to London. So I would have you go to

a room which I will get for you in a little alley hard by, and in two days time you may venture to Mr. Courtnay's in this disguise, which alters you so that I should never have known you in it. Till then you may, if you like, go about selling ballads and flowers, if you find staying rather lonesome."

Henry thought being "*lonesome*" much better than selling flowers and ballads; and having removed to his room in a dark alley near Covent Garden, he waited there with no small impatience till the jailor should tell him that he thought he might venture to Mr. Courtnay's, who lived in Henrietta-street.

Henry had ventured to walk out in an evening, and was at that hour so fearless while he did so, that he wished to go to Mr. Courtnay's at that time. But the jailor, finding that Mr. Courtnay's own counting-house, in which he usually sat alone, opened into and

looked into a court which was open to the street, he advised that Henry should go to his house in the day, and pass this window; and if he was there alone, enter the room on pretence of selling him flowers and ballads. By this means all intercourse with the servants or clerks would be avoided; and Mr. Courtnay might be trusted to contrive the best possible means of concealing Henry in future.

Henry was at length brought to approve this plan entirely: and having insisted on giving the jailor as soon as possible some reward for his kindness, it was settled that when Henry saw Mr. Courtnay he was to inform him that the jailor would walk under his window at such an hour that evening, like a blind man, playing a hurdy-gurdy; and that he would walk there till Mr. Courtnay came out, and gave him the promised recompense.

This plan was very satisfactory to the mind of Henry, who could not bear to receive so great an obligation without proving his sense of it in some way as soon as possible; and he well knew that his munificent friend would gladly double whatever he gave.

At length the jailor came to tell him he might, he thought, go to Mr. Courtnay's, and that he thought he had seen him at his own door that morning.

"See," added the jailor, "what I have brought you,—put these in your basket when you go."

Henry looked, and saw hand-bills describing himself in the most minute particularity; and offering a great reward for his apprehension. He shuddered while he read; but as Henrietta-street was a very little way off, and he knew that if once in Mr. Courtnay's counting-house he might be concealed, even unknown to

the servants, he conquered his fears, and set off for the place of his destination.

He reached the door of the court in safety, and almost unnoticed, as such figures as his were too common to be molested: and looking in at the counting-house window, he saw his friend:—but in vain did he try to engage his attention. Mr. Courtnay angrily waved him away with his hand, and continued to read the newspaper. He was therefore obliged to open the door and go into the room. On seeing this intrusion, Mr. Courtnay hastily rose and commanded him to go away. But Henry held out a nosegay, and one of the papers describing himself, to him.

As soon as the name of Henry Woodville caught his eye, Mr. Courtnay changed colour, and seized the hand-bill—" Have you any more of these vile papers, wo-

man?" said he, seizing the basket; then tearing them all into a hundred pieces, he threw down the basket, and grasping Henry's arm, exclaimed, "If you dare to sell any more of those accursed papers, I will have you taken up, I will...."

What other threats he would have uttered I know not; but his utterance was suddenly suspended; for Henry, affected by even this impotent attempt to serve him, so indicative of affectionate feeling, laid his head against his shoulder, and burst into tears.

"My kind friend!" said Henry in his own voice. More was unnecessary. Mr. Courtnay did not even attempt to reply; but he instanly drew down the blind, grasped Henry's hand, put his finger on his lips, to enforce the necessity of silence, and then locking Henry into the room, disappeared without uttering a word.

He returned in about half an hour,

and then opening a small door in the counting-house, he led the way up a staircase which communicated with the dwelling-house; and Henry soon found himself in a sort of lumber-garret, but far removed from the rest of the house.

Mr. Courtnay now ventured to speak, and to give utterance to all the feelings of his affectionate heart.

As soon as he had recovered his emotion, he told Henry that when he had left him, he went to send the servants out of the way, that he might get the key of the lumber-room, (which was always locked up, because it opened on the stairs communicating with the counting-house,) and convey into it wine and other refreshments from a cook's-shop adjoining. That done, he had locked the door on the outside, and was now certain that Henry would be quite safe for the present in that asylum.

Henry now, at his earnest request, re-

lated the particulars of his escape to him, and of his arrival in London. When he had ended, Mr. Courtnay exclaimed,—"Then neither here nor in London must you remain another night. The jailor you might trust; but his son may betray you to his accomplices, as I see the reward for your apprehension is considerable; and I will this moment set about putting in execution a plan to place you in a secure abode."

Henry then told him what he had promised the jailor; and Mr. Courtnay said he would take care to be in the way at the appointed hour, and the jailor should not have cause to repent his kindness.

Mr. Courtnay then went down the stairs into the counting-house, having first locked Henry in on that side also; who with a thankful and lightened heart threw himself on a sort of broken sofa beside him: and now feeling himself

secure under the roof of his friend, he enjoyed the only comfortable sleep he had known since he quitted the prison.

Mr. Courtnay did not return till the hour in which the jailor was to appear as a blind man; and he was already in the street before he reached his house. But he had not to wait long for his reward, which was thoroughly proportioned to the service.

The jailor then said, "God bless you, sir, and the young gentleman! I know you will take care of him; and I do not even wish to know where you will put him;—it is better not—so I do not ask."

This was a proof of the jailor's honesty, and Courtnay left him with a lightened heart.

He now took a bundle from a porter who followed him, and carried it into the counting-house, having first seen that

the clerks were too busy to notice what he did. He then carried the bundle into Henry's room.

His unlocking the door roused Henry from his sleep. "Come, my dear Henry," said Mr. Courtnay, "there is no time to be lost; I give you an hour to eat your dinner and to clothe yourself in this dress and wig, and then you must be off."

He then left him to dress; but returned before he had eaten his dinner, to tell him all he knew of his father, who, on hearing of Henry's escape, had accompanied Mr. Courtnay the next day to London, as no tidings of the runaways had been received, because they thought it likely he would seek shelter at Mr. Courtnay's. But that Mrs. Woodville had fretted herself into so severe an attack of fever, that her husband had been forced to return home without waiting for news of his son. "But no doubt the joy of

your escape has cured her by this time," added he: "And now make the best of your way on the Berkshire road, and by the time you are out of London I shall stop and take you up."

Mr. Courtnay had gone in search of a complete suit of second-hand livery, with a footman's hat and great coat, and as natural a head of dark hair to match Henry's present complexion as he could procure. And as a public masquerade, on account of some rejoicings, was going to take place, he was believed when he said that he wanted it for masquerade purposes.

He then ordered a travelling-chariot with four post-horses to come to his door as soon as it was dark; having previously told his clerks that he was forced to leave town on account of the danger of a dear friend. Then taking pistols both for himself and Henry, he desired the postillions to drive towards Berkshire,

and stop to take up his footman on the road.

Henry was at the appointed spot; and Mr. Courtnay having desired him to sit on the box, gave him a brace of pistols and a blunderbuss, and desired the drivers to drive as fast as possible.

Mr. Courtnay had provided Henry with a green bandage for one of his eyes, in order to obscure his face as much as possible during the day; and while they drove along, he wore it over one eye.

I will not stop to describe Henry's feelings as he went along this now well-known road, so lately traversed twice under different circumstances:—the first time, full of hope and expectation of pleasure; the second, as a convicted murderer flying from justice. But I will proceed to relate Mr. Courtnay's plans for his beloved charge. He thought that Henry was not so likely to be sought

for near the spot whence he had escaped, as at a distance from it. He therefore resolved to take him to Bristol, cross the Severn with him, and then see him settled in some lodging near Chepstow.

Accordingly, on the road, Henry officiated as his footman, and even till they reached Wales: but when once across the water, Mr. Courtnay produced an entire suit of clothes belonging to Henry, which he had left in a trunk under Mr. Courtnay's care when he set off for the races;—and thus equipped once more like himself, except that his complexion was allowed to retain a little of its dark hue, they sallied forth in search of a place of abode.

Fortunately they found what they sought, at the house of an elderly woman two miles from Chepstow, and in a field which extended to the banks of the Wye.

Opposite the sitting-room and bed-

chamber, which were to be Henry's, (who said he came thither for change of air,) stood a small neat mansion covered with ivy and honeysuckle, which was, they found, recently let to a tenant who had not yet taken possession. But, with this single exception, the good woman said, she had not a rich neighbour near her.

Henry immediately (under the name of William Granville) took possession of his apartment; and Mr. Courtnay left him with as little *serrement de cœur* as possible, since he now believed he was in a place of security; and he knew that he could, by sending him books, pencils, paints, and paper, (for Henry was an excellent artist,) enable him to beguile pleasantly, if not usefully, the hours of enforced solitude.

Mr. Courtnay also promised to go immediately to Mr. and Mrs. Woodville;—write to them he dared not by the post, nor could Henry;—but he was the bearer

of a letter to them from their now recovered child—recovered as it were from the grave.

It was now for the first time since his commitment to prison that Henry Woodville was able to compose his agitated mind; to arrange his scattered thoughts; to feel the reality of all that surrounded him; to take in, in all its extent, the magnitude and truth of his past danger; and to feel sufficiently grateful to Providence for the mercy vouchsafed to him.

True, he was now obliged to live under a feigned name, in a state of nearly absolute solitude;—true, he must for an indefinite term live an exile from those whom he most loved:—but then he had escaped from a violent and disgraceful death, the consequence of an unjust sentence, and was enjoying the comforts of fine air, sufficient food, and in a country replete with every charm that can allure the fancy and gratify the

taste; while he also enjoyed that great benefit bestowed by misfortune—the conviction that he had friends who loved him, and who clung to him in his utmost need.

And were not all these things blessings? and was he not favoured of Heaven? One thing alone then was wanting to his happiness—to have his innocence entirely cleared to the world; and even that he believed would one day happen: for he trusted, as any pious mind would do, that He who had vouchsafed to snatch him from the grasp of death, would also in his good time restore him to fame and to his family. In the mean while he had health, competence, and a residence in a sort of earthly paradise—for such may the banks of the Wye be called.

But contented as the happy mind of Henry already was with his situation, it was about to become still more so; and

fascinating as the scenes around him were, they too were about to become more fascinating still;—for he was soon to view them through the sweet and flattering medium of love.

He had only been settled two days in his new dwelling, when his landlady told him that she saw, by the unusual bustle in the opposite house, that the new tenants were arrived;—"And they are," said she, "a lady and her daughter only, besides servants: I wish, for your sake, sir, there had been a gentleman too."

Henry smiled, and thanked her: but as he never heard of "a lady and her daughter" without a sort of thrilling feeling, and a hope which, however disappointed, was always reviving again, he did not regret that there was no man of the party; but he did feel great curiosity to see the ladies.

Nor was it long before he had that gratification; for, having seen them walk

out in the cool of the evening towards the banks of the river, he had followed them at a short distance; and on their return from a walk along the river towards Piercefield, he contrived to meet them. But what words can express his emotion and delight, when he found the dreams of his fancy realized at last, and that he at length beheld once more the only object whom he had ever loved! And she was living where he could see her every day; and perhaps he might become acquainted with her—perhaps he might even visit her! "Oh!" thought Henry, "whatever I have suffered, I bless the afflictions that have led to happiness like this." Henry could not certainly give a stronger proof that he was deeply enamoured.

But after the first moments of this happy delirium had subsided, he recollected that in his present situation he had no right to presume to be acquainted

with Mrs. Vincent and her daughter;—for, what was he now? An outcast, with a halter continually hanging over him; a convicted criminal, who had escaped from the punishment awarded him by the law, and now seeking, in solitude and in disguise, to avoid the fate which even yet might ultimately be his! "Alas!" thought he, "with this stained complexion and these blacked brows, how can I ever dare to present myself before the object of my faithful adoration!"

Mr. Courtnay had advised Henry, as I before said, to retain his artificial complexion, brows, and hair: but vanity, and perhaps a better feeling, now led him to disregard this advice, and to resolve to get rid of his *seemings* as soon as he could, whether he became known to the Vincents or not.

Accordingly, to the surprise of his landlady, the dark-complexioned youth became every day fairer and fairer: but

this she very naturally attributed to the fine air of Herefordshire. The next change was from dark hair to auburn;—that she felt certain was a change not owing to air alone: but as, fortunately for Henry, she was not of a suspicious nature, she only supposed that before he wore a wig, and now he did not.

His auburn brows were now allowed to wear their own natural and becoming hue, and to harmonize as usual with his auburn hair: and when Henry said, "She shall see me as I really am, or not at all," he might believe he was entirely guided by integrity of feeling and principle at the moment: but certainly, if integrity inspired, vanity must have rewarded the ablutions and the change,—for the natural man was infinitely superior to the artificial one. Whether the rejection of all disguise was, under his circumstances, approved by prudence, is another consideration.

Mrs. Vincent was very soon, by different circumstances, thrown in the way of Henry's landlady, and they were mutually pleased with each other. Mrs. Vincent saw in *her*, one who was likely to prove a kind and useful neighbour; and *she* admired in Mrs. Vincent, an affable and apparently very clever woman. The daughter was, she thought, quite a beauty, and very engaging;—but then she was too young to be a companion to her.

In consequence of this acquaintance, Mrs. Vincent called one evening at Mrs. Evans's (Henry's landlady); and it was while she was looking over a portfolio of Henry's drawings, which he had lent her at her particular request.

The drawings were good; so much so, that Mrs. Vincent begged leave to take them home with her to show her daughter: and Mrs. Evans ventured to grant the permission.

Anna Vincent, on seeing them, pro-

nounced the drawings to be so good, that they must be by the hand of an artist; and as her mother was very desirous that her daughter should obtain instruction in an art of which she already knew something, Mrs. Evans promised to find out whether Mr. Granville would take a pupil.

When Mrs. Evans put this question to Henry, he was so choked with joy that he could scarcely answer it; but at length he said, "To be sure I will—and gladly too:"—and the delighted Mrs. Evans went over the way immediately, to convey the glad tidings, leaving the happy Henry at liberty to walk up and down his room, and express his rapture as incoherently as he pleased.

But Mrs. Evans soon returned with a message which damped his joy completely. "Mrs. Vincent's compliments, sir, and begs you to name your terms."

"My terms!" exclaimed Henry, start-

ing, "My terms! What does she mean?" But recollecting himself, he added, "Oh, yes, I know now,—yes—yes: I will consider about it. Tell her, with my respectful compliments, that she shall hear from me to-morrow:"—and the good woman left him, not as before, to joyous, but painful consideration. For, if he was paid for his lessons, he must become acquainted with them only as an inferior; and that would be an unfavourable circumstance for the success of his love, and was not therefore to be thought of. But as a gentleman, and a perfect stranger to them, what pretensions had he to become the teacher of Miss Vincent? But then again he considered, that in his own real person he could never now presume to address her or any woman;—and was he not forced to submit, through adverse circumstances, to the disgrace of appearing under a feigned name?

"Alas!" thought Henry, "as a hired

and paid drawing-master I am now a far more respectable person in situation than Henry Woodville, and have as good a right to address Miss Vincent,—therefore, pride avaunt!—and I will ask her so much a lesson,—not to be paid, however, till my lessons are at an end, and by that time perhaps all necessity for disguise will be over."

The next day, therefore, he sent Mrs. Evans over to acquaint Mrs. Vincent with his terms, which were accepted; and with a beating heart Henry prepared the next morning to be introduced to Anna and her mother.

Though he had seen them several times during the four days that they had been at the Cottage (as their house was called), they had never seen him. If they had, perhaps Mrs. Vincent would not have been so ready to allow her daughter to learn of him; though Mrs. Evans assured her that Mr. Granville was a very

quiet, well-behaved young person; with but a dingy complexion when he first came, but that the air of Wales had cleared it surprisingly, and now he was very like her poor dear Tom who died.

Yes—they had never yet seen Henry, except the first night when they met him on the banks of the river, but without looking at him; as, with that conscious timidity ever attendant on feelings like his, he had shrunk from crossing them in their path, and had been hitherto contented with seeing them, himself unseen; —or rather, I should say, had been contented with seeing Anna, who seemed since he last beheld her to be increased in beauty and in grace.

But now he was to meet her eye, and never (except when he used to dress for St. James's Park in hopes of seeing her there) did he find it so difficult to satisfy himself with the result of his toilet.

At length, however, the wished yet

dreaded hour arrived: and Henry, as Mr. Granville, was presented to Mrs. Vincent and her daughter by the good Mrs. Evans.

It is very certain that when Mrs. Vincent and Anna first saw Henry enter the room, and beheld his graceful bow, his blushing cheek, and ingenuous countenance, the mother looked grave, while the daughter looked pleased. However, Mrs. Vincent knew that she had always inculcated in her daughter a horror of a misalliance, and she trusted that her pride would keep a sufficient guard over her affections.

The young lady now, at a sign from her mother, produced her drawings, which, though much inferior to his own, Henry admired exceedingly: and at the end of the first lesson, the pupil and the master parted, satisfied with each other, and eager for the next lesson.

Mrs. Vincent, too, could not help own-

ing she had rarely seen a more pleasing-looking young man, and she suspected that he had once been in a higher situation of life. Anna had thought so before:—and perhaps it was not wise in her mother to confirm her judgement on this point by her own.

There were now only four days in the week to Henry; namely, those on which he went to give Anna her lessons. Of the intermediate time he passed much in watching from behind a curtain, to see them go in and out. He used to rise at daybreak; sometimes to make sketches on the water, and of Chepstow Castle, for Anna to copy: but he dared not walk out, now he had regained his complexion, when he was likely to meet boats on the river, or persons on the bank; and when he took his evening walk, and met the ladies, Mrs. Vincent by her manner showed that she did not mean he should join them.

Insensibly, however, her cold reserve wore away; and as Henry assured her Miss Vincent would learn to draw from Nature much better if he accompanied her, she was allowed to rise very early twice a week, and with her mother partake of Henry's morning rambles and sketches: and sometimes when they had walked towards Monmouth, they returned together in a boat.

Still he was not on visiting terms with them. But accident favoured him in this respect; as Mrs. Vincent fell into the water one evening, by overreaching herself in trying to save her handkerchief, which was floating away, while she was with Anna in a boat in the middle of the river; and she would probably have been drowned, had not Henry, who was passing, jumped in, and seizing her as she rose, succeeded in dragging her to land.

This was indeed a joyful event for

Henry; and never had his ear drunk in such sweet words as now, when he heard the soft and touching voice of Anna hail and bless him as the *preserver of her mother*.

Mrs. Vincent, though alarmed, did not suffer from the accident; therefore there was no drawback to the pleasure of the *young people*. But to the joy of being preserved, there was to *Mrs. Vincent* a *considerable* drawback in the captivations of her preserver, who was already too charming, she feared, for the safety of her daughter's affections.

She now could not, without excessive ingratitude, omit to invite him as a guest to the house occasionally; as Mrs. Evans now told them the flute which charmed them so often on the bank, was played by Henry: and while he was therefore enabled to display another accomplishment, and Anna now asked him continually to accompany her on the spinet,

and in her songs, Mrs. Vincent saw that there was no safety for her daughter but in removal; and on pretence of sudden business, she told Anna that they must set off for London the next week, or the week after at furthest.

The paleness of her cheek, the tears that started in her eyes, and the dejection of her manner, would have revealed the state of her heart to her mother, if she had not suspected it before; and Anna she knew could, no more than herself, have been blind to the evident attachment which beamed in the expressive eyes, and spoke in the softened voice of Henry whenever he addressed her.

And he had saved her mother's life too! and that tender mother knew this circumstance alone would have led her affectionate daughter to behold her master with eyes of tender and grateful regard.

However, unless Anna declared her secret unasked, Mrs. Vincent resolved

not to own that she already knew it; and she hoped that absence and other scenes would remove the impression, which, as yet, only three months acquaintance had deepened.

When Mrs. Vincent disclosed her intended journey to Henry, he was sitting with them on the banks of the Wye, and drawing a view which Anna particularly admired. But when he heard the misery that awaited him, the pencil fell from his hand, and he was for a few minutes incapable of speaking;—and when he did speak, it was in a tone so mournful!—but he did not express any regret; he only said, "Shall you be gone long?"

"Some months," was the answer. And Henry starting up, declared his hand shook so that he could draw no more.

The banks were now enamelled with that flower, radiant in Heaven's own blue, long known in Germany, and now known in England by the name of the

"Forget-me-not!" and as Henry was unconsciously gathering it, and then throwing it away, Anna asked him if he knew the German name of it. He replied in the negative; and when she told it him, he gathered a large bunch of it, and declared that he would carry it home with him.

The next day he rose very early, and drew a bunch of these flowers; and when he next saw Anna, he begged her to accept it, and to remember what it *said*.

What more he would have said, emboldened by the downcast eye, the blushing cheek, and trembling frame of Anna, I know not; for Mrs. Vincent now entered the room: and Anna, instead of showing the painting, with a consciousness very flattering to Henry, hastily inclosed it in her portfolio.

While Henry was thus winning the daughter's affections with her own free

will, and the mother's against her will, his daily visits became almost necessary to the peace and health, *apparently*, of an obscure man at the extremity of the village.

Mrs. Evans was very good to the poor around her, though her means of being so were not abundant; and she soon found that her new lodger like herself, had "a hand open as day to melting charity." She was also a great doctor, and a great surgeon also in her own estimation; and Henry, whose grandfather had been a physician, had early had his attention turned to medicine, with a view to his being brought up to it: consequently his good landlady, on finding how well he talked on the subject, whenever she started it, used to consult him now and then on some of her curious cases.

One day she was so lame with the rheumatism as to be unable to move,

which she excessively regretted, she said, because there was a poor distressed man in the village, whom she could not visit as usual; and she was afraid that he really wanted a fresh prescription.

Henry immediately offered to visit him in the evening. But as she was accustomed to see him at noon, (the time when he was at the worst,) and she knew the surgeon from Chepstow was too ill to visit him at all, Henry, who was now grown bold from imagined security, promised to go and visit the poor man immediately: and having received the necessary directions, he set off for his cottage.

"The poor man has," said Mrs. Evans, "a sorry jade of a wife, through whose means it is said he has been connected with smugglers; but she is gone frolicking somewhere, and he is always most patient and tractable when she is away."

Henry soon found the place to which

he was directed, and entered a dark and dismal-looking dwelling, where, on a flock bed, "with tape-tied curtains, never meant to draw," he beheld a wretched-looking being, whose sunk pale cheek, and half-closed eyelids, (closed not in sleep, but with languor,) looked the very image of "pining atrophy."

He did not notice Henry's entrance: but when he kindly asked him how he did, and said he was come to visit him because Mrs. Evans could not, the wretched being started up from his pillow, and exclaimed, "For mercy's sake, what voice is that I hear! and what do you come hither for?"

Henry gently explained his business, and who he was. But the man, after gazing on him with frightful eagerness, fell back fainting on his pillow.

Henry was not prepared for a reception like this; as Mrs. Evans had not given him the slightest hint that the

poor man was delirious; but made use of the best means the circumstances afforded to restore him; and they were soon effectual.

When recollection was completely restored, he started up and looked wistfully at Henry; and finding how kindly he was supporting his burning head, and watching his wan countenance, he exclaimed, "I cannot bear it!" and pushing off Henry's arm, he sunk down and hid his face in the bed-clothes: but instantly after starting up again, he desired to know how long Henry had been at Mrs. Evans's; and how long he meant to stay, and why he came there at all?

To such questions, from a man in health, Henry would not have thought it necessary to give an answer; but not wishing to increase the irritation of the sufferer, he mildly said, that he had been at Mrs. Evans's three months; that he came for the sake of being out of the

world, and that his stay was uncertain.

While Henry said this, he was mixing a composing draught, which, when he had finished speaking, he offered to the poor man's lips, telling him it would do him good. But he pushed it away from him; and bursting into a sort of hysterical flood of tears, he exclaimed, "No, no! not from you,—I will not take it from you,—it would choke me!"

"That is unfortunate," replied Henry, "as Mrs. Evans will not be able to see you perhaps for many days, and the surgeon is ill: therefore, if you are afraid of taking a medicine from me, I can do you no good, and had better not come again."

"Not come again! Oh! not come again! for mercy's sake, come every day; the sight of you will do me more good than any physic."

"That's nonsense."

"No no, no, no! it is not nonsense: and I conjure you," he added, "if you have any pity in you, to let me see you every day; and then, I will even take poison to please you.—Promise me you will come every day."

"I cannot; it is too much to ask of me: but I will see you every other day."

"And let me hear from you, when I don't see you?"

"Perhaps so."

"God bless you! God bless you! And he will bless you;—it is me, me alone whom he will curse and pursue with his vengeance!"

Here he really howled with agony: and Henry, sick at heart, feared that though this unhappy patient was insane, that insanity proceeded from a burthened conscience. Still he recollected that even the good in a state of derangement accuse themselves of crimes which they

are incapable of committing: he therefore suppressed the suspicion as unjust, and tried to soothe the mind of the sufferer by dwelling on the mercy of the Being whom he feared.

But the more he tried to calm him, the more violent he became; and all he said was—"I cannot bear it!—don't talk so kindly!—don't, I cannot bear it!"—Then suddenly seizing Henry's arm, he said, "Do not come any more at this time of day—come in the dark hour—come in the dark hour! I cannot bear that you should come in the day-light."

"I must come when suits me best," replied Henry. "But now I must go;—so take the draught, or never expect to see me again."

The poor wretch then eagerly seized it, and drank it off. And as it was a strong anodyne, Henry knew the effect would not be long in showing itself; he therefore waited to witness it; and had

soon the satisfaction of seeing the agitation of the patient subside: and when Henry left the place, he seemed scarcely conscious of his departure.

There is certainly no passion which so wholly annihilates attention to every thing else as the passion of love. Had Henry not been under its influence, he would undoubtedly have seen something uncommon in the manner of this man when he saw him, and in the questions he asked him, and in the words which he addressed to him. But so completely were all the business and all the interest of life now comprised to Henry in making drawings for Anna to copy;—in reading books, in order to select passages to show to her;—in watching for the hour when he was to be permitted to see or to walk with her;—in recollecting, when he left her, all she said, and all she looked,—that he insensibly forgot the sword of the law was suspended over his head; and

also that he was sentenced to die, and might yet die, for a crime which another (as yet undiscovered) had committed. Nay—what, if he had considered the subject, would have appeared still more unaccountable to himself, he was now reconciled to what at first appeared a terrible hardship to him—separation from his family and his friends, and no intercourse with them by letter, save "All well," written in the inside of a parcel of books and other things which Mr. Courtnay sent every three months; and sometimes a cold guarded letter, which he trusted by the post; in which occasionally a few cautious lines were written by his father's hand. So properly careful were they, lest they should give any clue to discover Henry's retreat, as Bradford and his son had solemnly sworn they would never rest till they had discovered him.

It would have been a great comfort to

Henry Woodville's family and friends, to know that he had found in the joys of a first and still increasing attachment, oblivion for every care, and a sunshine for every prospect; and that even separation from them had ceased to be a misery.

When Henry saw Mrs. Evans again, he told her that he wondered she had not informed him that he was going to visit a madman, or at least a man in a delirium.

"Dear me!" she replied, "the poor soul is no more mad than I am; to the best of my belief, he is only a poor moped sinner."

"He is more like a raving lunatic," said Henry, "and, as suspicious as those persons generally are; for he was afraid to take medicine from me, and asked me many questions of who I was, and why I came;—and then, strange to say, he insisted on my coming to see him every day, but not to come till dark."

"Well, I can only say he was not mad when I saw him," replied the good woman; and the conversation dropped.

The next day Henry was too much engaged even to think of his poor patient, as he was to spend the morning at Mrs. Evans's, in looking over both Anna and her mother, who had lately wisely chosen to take lessons herself, while they copied some sketches of his from the Wye, which they wished to take away with them;—and after dining with them he was to accompany them to the beautiful walks about Piercefield, which at that time of day could boast little except the beauties of nature.

It was late when they came in sight of their own habitation. But before they reached it, a wretched-looking being suddenly started up from the grass along which he had thrown himself, and running up to Henry, said, "Why have you not been to see me? and if you could

not come, why did you not send? I have been so wretched; and Goody Evans said she did not know where you were gone. But now I see you, and I am so glad!"

"My good man," cried Henry kindly, (while the ladies listened with a mixture of fear and pity to the wild wan being before them,) "I could not come to you, and I forgot to send: but do go home now the air is growing chill, and I really will see you to-morrow."

"Aye, to-morrow evening," he replied; "and I shall expect you."

So saying he walked away with irregular and uncertain steps; leaving Mrs. Vincent and Anna convinced, as well as Henry, of his derangement. And Anna could not help saying she thought he ought to be careful how he trusted himself alone with him.

The next evening, before he took his

accustomed walk, (which always ended in meeting the ladies on the banks, if he was not invited to walk with them,) Henry went to visit the invalid.

"So you are come, are you?" said he: "Thank God!"

"Yes," replied Henry, full of pity for the forlorn state of the being before him, who was left without any attendant but a niece, a child of twelve years old: "Yes, I am come; and I hope to make your condition more comfortable, if money can do it, and what money can purchase. See, I have brought you a pillow," said he, taking a basket from a little boy who followed him: "and here are some provisions for you: and as your fever makes you chilly I see at times, I have ordered you some coals. And...."

Here Henry was forced to cease speaking, by the violent emotion of the wretched man, expressed by convulsive sobs,

by the clenching of his bony fists, and by every outward and visible sign of a soul in agony.

"Leave me! leave me!" he at length exclaimed; "I cannot bear it—Pray go —I am unworthy such goodness—Pray go! for mercy's sake, go! But be sure to let me see you to-morrow, and every day, or I shall go distracted."

Henry at first hesitated what to do. But he repeated his prayers for his absence so urgently, that at length he complied; after having put the pillow under the poor man's head, who, as he did so, caught his hand suddenly to his lips, and then motioned him to the door.

Henry could not go to him the next day; but he sent a message to know how he did; and the answer was, "All the better for the message."

The next time and several times after that when he visited him, Henry found

him quite composed, though evidently depressed;—and from the questions which he now put to him he was convinced that his conscience was really burthened by some serious offence; and he urged him to send for the minister of the parish to pray with him, and give him that spiritual consolation which he seemed desirous of.

"No, no; the minister," he replied, "is too great a sinner himself to speak comfort to me. One word of kindness, and one 'God bless you' from you, do me more good than he could do me. And when you read the Bible to me, and show me that the penitent sinner may be saved, why then I feel comforted,—and then I think I can do any thing to save...."

Here he again fell into a violent agony of tears; out of which when he recovered his first words were—"Pray, pray let me

never be a day without seeing or hearing from you!"

Henry would not promise to comply with this request. But so natural is it to the benevolent to enjoy the power of comforting the wretched being who hangs on them for comfort, that no promise could have bound Henry more strongly to a daily visit to the sick man's hut, than the consciousness his presence spoke peace to the soul of the sinner;—nor did a day pass without his performance of all the dues of christian charity to this miserable and forlorn being.

During one of his visits he found a very unwelcome witness of his kindness; for the abandoned wife of the man was returned, and, in Henry's presence, cursed him for a cowardly, canting, snivelling scoundrel. Nor did Henry's presence seem any restraint on her, for she was fortified by liquor against fear of any one.

At the next visit she was even more disgusting to him: for as he came at an earlier hour, and the setting sun shone brightly on his countenance, the woman (who was more intoxicated than she was the day before) met him at the door, and exclaiming, "Bless your beautiful face!" threw her arms round him, and attempted to kiss him.

With disgust and abhorrence too strong to be concealed, Henry threw the offender from him, who staggered up the valley, muttering curses on him.

Her husband, who had witnessed this scene, now broke out into self-congratulations that the drunken creature was gone to Chepstow, and would not return for a day or two.

However, she returned about noon the day after, and was present when Henry was sent for by Mrs. Evans, to exert his influence over his poor charge. She had gone to visit him, with the surgeon,

who was now able to attend; and he had insisted on bleeding him. But the man would not consent,—declaring he hated the sight of blood—that he had seen enough of it:—and he raved so violently that Mrs. Evans wished to try what effect Henry's presence would have on him.

Accordingly she sent for him, and he came. But neither his soothings and entreaties, nor the wife's execrations, could prevail on the refractory patient: —he declared the sight of the blood would kill him; and the point was given up.

Henry meanwhile could not help remarking the attention with which the sufferer's wife regarded him,—turning aside while she did so, to look at something which she held in her hand,—and looking at him with an expression of great malignity.

The following evening Henry was to

accompany Mrs. Vincent and her daughter in a walk along the banks of the river; and as Anna meant to gather some wild flowers, intending to paint them, she had provided herself with an old newspaper to wrap them up in.

As she was unfolding it, assisted by Henry, who luckily for him stood with his back to the light, which was now growing fainter and fainter,—his own name caught his eye; and he saw that it was a detail of his escape.

Anna saw it too, and exclaimed, "O dear! I am sorry I brought this paper, for I meant to keep it. It is that, my dear mother, which contains the account of that poor young man Henry Woodville's escape from prison."

"Does it?" replied Mrs. Vincent: "Aye, I remember what a great interest you always took in that unhappy person —for you never believed him guilty, you know."

"No, nor ever can," said Anna eagerly.

Henry's hand now shook so violently, that he dropped the paper with the flowers which he was holding for Anna: and this accident not only gave him an excuse for stooping down to pick them up again; but, as he felt himself excessively faint, the attitude of stooping accounted for his being forced to lie down to recover, as he said, the giddiness that seized him.

"That proceeds from stooping so long and so low, after a hot and fatiguing walk, Mr. Granville," said Mrs. Vincent kindly: "when we get home, I shall insist on prescribing some wine for you."

Anna said nothing: but her cheek was as pale as Henry's, who now, however, recovered sufficiently to proceed on their return.

"Yes," said Mrs. Vincent, in order to take Henry's attention from himself by engaging it on an interesting subject;

"I never remember to have felt so much interest in any trial, as I did in that of young Woodville. I had heard my acquaintance, Mr. Courtnay, speak so well of him, that I wished him to be acquitted. But he was found guilty; and really, in my opinion, on incontrovertible evidence. What do you think, Mr. Granville—for I conclude you read the trial?"

"Yes, madam," he replied in a hoarse voice: "I have read it; and the circumstantial evidence is the strongest I ever saw."

"There, Anna," said Mrs. Vincent.

"Yes," she replied, "I own it is very strong: but I have seen as strong; and yet the innocence of the poor creature, who has been hanged in consequence of it, has been proved at last. But indeed, dear mother, Mr. Granville has not yet said he thinks poor Henry Woodville guilty."

"No," said Henry firmly, yet in an impeded tone; "I never can say it; for I am sure Henry Woodville is as innocent as you are of the crime imputed to him."

"There, there—do you hear that?" cried Anna triumphantly. "Oh, how I rejoice that he escaped! And you know, mamma, I always said I wished we had known him, and he had fled to us for shelter; for in our last house we could have concealed him so well!"

"Perhaps so—but we *should* not have concealed him, I believe. I could not have thought it right to have interfered in such a manner with the execution of justice."

"Of justice! But are you sure it was justice, mamma?"

"Yes—I fear it was; and under those circumstances I should not have thought myself justified in holding any communication whatever with the culprit."

"Culprit!" cried Anna, "I cannot bear to hear you call him so: and I earnestly hope, wherever he is, he will never be discovered; and I have no doubt but that one day or other his innocence will be made manifest. Do not you agree with me, Mr. Granville?"

"I earnestly hope and even trust it will," replied Henry in a faint voice, the tone of which was so touching, and he seemed to speak with such feeling, that Anna turned towards him, and said just as they reached Mrs. Vincent's door—"Dear me! perhaps you know Mr. Henry Woodville?—If so, what pain have we given you!"

Henry pressed her hand, but did not reply; and they entered the house.

Mrs. Vincent, as it was now dark, called for a candle; and having gone in search of wine, brought Henry a glass, which he drank with a shaking hand: but he did not offer to sit down, though

he was engaged to supper, and the supper was ready.

"Why do you not sit down, Mr. Granville?" said Mrs. Vincent: "you do not seem fit to stand:" while Anna gazed on his altered countenance with tearful eyes.

"I am still less fit to sit in your presence, madam," replied Henry, with an assumed manner, though in a trembling voice: "nor unauthorized by you, madam, will I ever appear before you again: —in me you behold that unfortunate person, whom though you pity you condemn—for I am *Henry Woodville!*"

As he said this, he leaned nearly fainting against the door; and Anna, impelled by a variety of feelings, was springing towards him, but was checked by a severe glance from her mother, who, notwithstanding, was so overcome with the discovery, and the involuntary compas-

sion and well-motived regard which she felt towards Henry, not only as a companion, but as the preserver of her life, that she could not speak for some minutes. But rising suddenly, she took Henry's arm, and with gentle force led him to a seat.

The action said much, and Henry felt comforted. She then reseated herself: and leaning her head on her weeping daughter's shoulder, burst into tears.

When she recovered, she said, "I little thought any thing could have weakened my conviction of the guilt of Henry Woodville. But, such has been your conduct since we knew you, and such is the evidence in your favour, borne by your countenance and manner, that I own to you, dear unhappy young man, that my belief is shaken. I can only add, that I wish to hear the whole story from yourself, when you are able to relate it!"

"I am able now," he replied; "and before we part, you shall know all my presumption, and all my misery."

The story was long, for Henry began with his first seeing Anna; and the whole detail of his love, and his hopes, and his wishes: and when he owned with manly openness, but with becoming modesty, that he delayed to attend to the interests of his love, in order to forward the honourable plans of his honourable father, Mrs. Vincent's parental heart yearned towards the pious child; and she felt it must be nearly impossible for such a being to be a murderer.

Anna, meanwhile, hid her blushing face on the table; but insensibly she drew her chair nearer to Henry's; and before he had finished his narration, it was on the back of Henry's chair that her arm and her head reposed.

To be brief—Henry's story had such an effect on Mrs. Vincent, that she assured

him she was nearly if not quite convinced of his innocence. "And," added she, "if the wretched man fell by your hand, I am sure it was while you were so intoxicated as not to know what you did, or to remember it the next day. And, really, if you did not, who did, do you think, destroy him? Do you think he killed himself?"

"No; but I have strong suspicions that one of the waiters, who saw him display his gold, did it; and then was frightened away before he had secured the money."

"Yes," said Anna eagerly, "if I had been your counsel, I would have examined and cross-examined pretty severely that witness, one of the waiters, whose name I forget, who wore a shade over his eyes; and I would have tried to find out how long his eyes had been inflamed."

Henry owned that he had since regretted Tomms had been the only waiter

closely examined, because he was the only one suspected.

When Henry rose to take leave, Mrs. Vincent, whose journey had been delayed ten days longer than she expected, by unforeseen occurrences, now told him that she hoped he would not think her unkind, if she left her present residence on the following Monday, never to return; as, though a union with him under other circumstances would gratify her dearest wishes for her daughter, at present he must feel that, as a mother, it was her duty to suspend all intercourse between them.

"This is Friday," added Mrs. Vincent: "On Monday I shall be ready to set off; and on Sunday I shall be glad to see you; but it must be for the last time, unless the situation of things changes."

From this decision Henry's heart might appeal, but his judgement could not: and

as Anna, with an ingenuousness which endeared her the more to him, had owned that were he in a situation to ask her hand, it should without any hesitation be his, he felt happier than he could have expected to be, when he returned to his home. But then he was relieved by the consciousness that disguise and concealment, to which till now he had been a stranger and an enemy, no longer burthened his mind; and he had also the proud satisfaction of knowing, that in discovering who he was, at the risk of being forbidden the house of Mrs. Vincent, he had made an honourable sacrifice of his happiness to his integrity.

In the morning, however, when he rose, he remembered with agony that he could no longer pay his accustomed visits, or take his accustomed walk; and his spirits were so depressed, that he said to himself, "I will not go out to-day." But though he was not conscious of it,

the probable reason why he resolved to stay within was, that he might watch for a sight of Anna, and sometimes, perhaps, catch a look from her in return.

Nor did he, during that day, often leave the window of his apartment; consequently he did not visit the poor invalid: but Mrs. Evans did, and promised to excuse his not coming.

The whole of the morrow (which was Saturday) Henry passed within, partly from the wish of watching for Anna, and partly from indisposition; and as he concluded Mrs. Evans would visit the invalid, he omitted to send him a message, which he would otherwise have done.

But Mrs. Evans did not visit him; and when Henry, certain he could no longer expect to see Anna at her door or window, was contented to close his curtains, and throw himself on the sofa, to gain, if possible, a little sleep, in the dark hour,—he was suddenly disturbed by the

entrance of Mrs. Evans, who begged he would come down stairs directly, to pacify the poor sick man James, who was below, insisting on seeing him, and declaring, if he did not see him, he should conclude some mischief had happened to him.

Henry instantly rose and went down to him. At sight of him the wretched man clasped his hands in a transport of joy, and uttering "Thank God! thank God!" left the house before Henry could put a single question to him.

Henry had passed so sleepless a night, that he had only just breakfasted when the bell now rung for church; and as Mrs. Vincent had promised to receive him at her house on the Sunday, Henry did not scruple to go to public worship, though sure to meet her and Anna there: painful indeed it would have been to him to give up this last opportunity of worshipping with the beloved of his heart.

To church then Henry directed his steps. In the porch he saw the odious wife of James, who met him without any other notice than a malignant look, whose marked meaning he could not understand, and who snapped her fingers with a sort of triumphant contempt as he passed her.

After service was begun, two odd-looking men, strangers, entered the aisle; and as they were at a loss for a pew, Henry courteously opened the door of that which he occupied. They accepted the offer; and it was not long before they embarrassed him by the earnest and examining manner in which they regarded him.

Henry soon discovered that they had no prayer-books; he therefore lent them his: but he saw that they were incapable of using it, and was convinced that they were not frequent in their attendance on public worship—at least not in a church.

They might indeed be sectaries; but they wanted the serious and devout demeanour of persons belonging to any set of worshippers;—and fears, painful fears for himself, took possession of his mind.

But he had power to recommend himself in the secret depths of his oppressed heart to the God of his salvation; and when church was over, he felt himself armed against whatever evil might betide him.

When church was over, he stopped in the aisle to speak to Mrs. Vincent and Anna, whose eye, like his own, watched the motions of these odd-looking men, and saw with alarm that they followed close at the heels of Henry.

Just as they reached the church porch the men passed him; then, turning suddenly round, they each seized him by the arm, and showed their warrant to arrest him in the king's name.

"Whom do you take me for?" asked Henry.

"For Henry Woodville—a prisoner escaped from Abingdon jail, and condemned to die for murder."

"I am Henry Woodville," he replied, "and I surrender myself. But of the murder for which I must suffer, take notice, all who are here present, that I am as innocent as you are."

"Come, come—that is cant we are used to," replied one of the men. "We have a cart waiting for us, and to it you must go."

During this time Henry had not dared to look towards Mrs. Vincent and Anna; but now, in an agony which words would ill endeavour to paint, he turned round to bid them a last farewell, and saw the latter lying insensible in the arms of her agitated mother.

He therefore disengaged himself from the men, who were just preparing to

handcuff him; and seizing the hand of the unconscious girl, pressed it again and again to his lips.

"You had better be out of sight when she revives, my dear Henry," faltered out Mrs. Vincent: "so farewell! God bless and support you!"

Anna now gave signs of returning life; and Henry being again seized by the impatient men, who were runners from Abingdon, kissed her cold hand, and that of her nearly fainting mother, and disappeared.

When they reached the cart, he found fetters were provided for his legs; and when ironed, he was seated between the two men, and in that manner conveyed across the Severn in the packet-boat, on the road to the jail whence he had escaped, leaving the mother and daughter in a state of mind more easy to imagine than to describe. But both had some consolation in the consciousness

that they had assured him they did not believe him guilty of the crime for which he was now only too sure to suffer.

When evening came, the poor invalid, as usual, was anxiously expecting to see Henry; as he never failed to visit him on a Sunday evening, and read to him the prayers for the day.

But he expected and listened for him in vain; and, though scarcely able to walk or even to sit up, he was on the point of rising and setting off in search of him, when his wife, half-intoxicated and with a countenance of malicious triumph, entered the hut.

"Do you see Mr. Granville coming?" asked the poor man.

"Mr. Granville indeed!" replied the termagant; "that canting hypocrite, that has made such a whining, praying, chicken-hearted wretch of you! No—I do not see him coming; and you will never see him again!"

"Not see him again! What do you mean?"

"I mean that I have got some good out of the fellow at last; for I found out who he was.—Why do you tremble and look so wildly, before you know what I have to tell you?"

The wretched man replied not; and she went on to say, "Yes—I found out that he must by the description be that Henry Woodville escaped from Abingdon jail. And so I wrote a letter to the prison, and they have sent two men who have carried him off; and I shall have the reward—and he will be hanged. Yes—I have done for him!"

"Then you have also done for me!" groaned out the wretched man. "Gone! taken! carried back to prison, and to be hanged for......! He hanged,—he!—so kind, so generous to......!"

Here he fell back on the pillow Henry had given him, in wild and inarticulate

bursts of sorrow; while his wife, declaring he was very bad company, left him to solitude and to woe.

As soon as she was gone, he rose and dressed himself, the firm and virtuous determination of his mind giving a sort of preternatural strength to his feeble and fevered frame. He then hastened to the ferry as fast as his trembling limbs could let him; and he reached it just as the second passage-boat was going off: he entered it, and was soon landed on the opposite side.

But how was he to pursue his journey? And while deliberating on what he had best do, a man in a cart drawn by a swift horse passed him, and, seeing his pale and sickly appearance, asked him if he should give him a cast. Gladly the poor wretch accepted it, and soon found himself some miles beyond Bristol on his road to Abingdon: but as he went along he talked so strangely, accusing himself

in so forcible a manner of a terrible crime, that the driver, thinking he was mad, made a pretence to get him out of the cart, and left him in the road.

This really brought on the delirium which was only in appearance before; and he was taken up on the road raving and exhausted, and carried to an inn near the place where he was found.

There, when he came a little to himself, he begged for mercy's sake they would send after Henry Woodville, and the men who were conveying him to prison, declaring that he *himself* committed the murder for which *he* was to suffer:—and having exhausted himself in uttering this declaration (which the bystanders attributed to delirium, and forced him to take a composing draught to assuage the phrensy), he sank down exhausted, and fell into a sleep which lasted some hours.

When he awoke,—and he awoke quite calm and collected,—he asked if they

had sent after Henry Woodville and his jailors, as he bade them. And on hearing that they had not done so (because they fancied he only spoke in delirium), he jumped off the bed on which they had laid him, in an agony of mind which it was terrible to witness; and rushing down stairs, conjured some one for the love of God to set off instantly for Abingdon.

At the door stood a gentleman's carriage, and the gentleman to whom it belonged; and he was at that moment giving orders to have four horses put-to directly, as he was on his road to London: and he heard the waiter say, "Four horses directly for the high-sheriff of Berkshire."

Everett (for it was he, as my readers have long discovered,) looked earnestly in Mr. Irwin's face as he turned round; and emboldened by the look of benevolent pity with which the gentleman sur-

veyed him, he seized his arm, and begged to speak to him alone.

He instantly complied with the request; when Everett, falling on his knees, as soon as the door was closed, exclaimed,—"You see before you a murderer! and an innocent man will suffer for my crime, unless I get to Abingdon time enough to prevent it! For mercy's sake, then, let me go on the top of your carriage; and give me the means to get on as fast as possible! O grant the prayer of a penitent sinner, and let not an angel, as he is, die for such a devil as I am!"

The look, the tone, the manner of the pleader bore such strong testimony to the truth of what he asserted, that Mr. Irwin hesitated not a moment what conduct to pursue:—and lucky was it that he addressed himself to a man who never saw misery but he was impatient to relieve it, nor wrong that he was not eager to redress.

In a few minutes, therefore, Mr. Irwin was in his chariot, with Everett by his side. He had the precaution (believing the wretched criminal had a very short time to live) to take with him pencil and paper in the carriage; and as they went along he took down Everett's deposition, interlarded as it was with expressions of grateful affection for Henry; who little thought that, while he was trying to soothe the misery of a distressed fellow-creature, he was befriending the man who had most injured him, and was thereby preparing the way for his own restoration to reputation, if not to life.

I need not say that Mr. Irwin resolved to carry Everett the whole way to Abingdon, nor that by the time Everett's tale was told he was as much interested for Henry as Everett himself, and as painfully impatient to reach Abingdon; especially as they found on inquiry that the

runners from Abingdon jail and their prisoner had nearly a day the start of them.

And though they travelled all that night, the heavy rains which fell the preceding day, together with their inability to procure fresh horses when they most wanted them, delayed them so much, that Mr. Irwin was at last forced to seek for a fleet horse, if such an one could be procured, to carry an order from him to suspend the execution till he arrived. But he found the attempt was vain.

Henry, meanwhile, on his arrival at Abingdon was informed that the sheriff of the town had resolved the execution should take place as soon as possible; for he was a relation and friend of Bradford's, and consequently was eager for the punishment of the murderer of his cousin.

At first Henry's feelings were so obtunded by the suddenness of the shock

which he had experienced, that he mistook despair for resignation: but now that he saw the hour of his fate rapidly and really approaching, he gave way to a bitterness of woe which till now was a stranger to him; and felt what an increase of misery it was to have to resign not only his family, his friends, and his life, but the object who was become dearer to him than life itself.

"And to die without seeing any one of the objects most beloved by me!—to die without seeing HER once more, and without receiving one farewell look or word!"

While these regrets were uppermost, he resolved to petition for a few days respite. But when he recollected what his friend and his father had endured at their last parting, and how much Anna would endure on taking a last farewell of him, he suppressed all idea of soliciting so selfish an indulgence; and

resolved to write instead of endeavouring to speak his last adieux.

He did so, and had scarcely concluded them, when he was told that the ordinary waited without; and that, as the fatal moment was arrived, he must prepare for immediate execution.

The high-sheriff meanwhile and his nearly exhausted companion were with jaded horses (no others having been to be procured) making their way towards Abingdon, through a sleepless and anxious night. At length however, in the morning, as the clock struck nine, they drove into the town, and saw a crowd assembled before the gate of the prison.

"O merciful Father! grant that we are not too late!" cried Mr. Irwin; while the parched tongue of Everett cleaved to the roof of his mouth.

The next moment, however, they saw the executioner just preparing to do his office, and Henry calmly submitting to it.

"Stop, stop!" cried Mr. Irwin, waving his handkerchief from the window, but not yet near enough to be heard; and Everett as vainly shook his emaciated hand out on the other side.

But at length the high-sheriff's livery was seen, and his carriage recognised; and while he continued to wave his handkerchief, and the horses to advance, the crowd hailed it as a signal of deliverance to the interesting criminal; and "A reprieve!—a reprieve!—The high-sheriff! —the high-sheriff!" sounded through the throng.

In a moment they made way for the horses, and the carriage stopped by the cart.

In one moment more the footman had let down the step; and supporting Everett under the arm, Mr. Irwin ascended the scaffold with him.

As soon as Henry saw Everett who stretched out his arms imploringly to

him, he came forward, tottering and fettered as he was, to meet him.

"I...I murdered Bradford!—I am the real murderer!" he exclaimed, turning to the crowd; then falling at Henry's feet, he tried to clasp his powerless arms round him, and murmuring out "Best of men, forgive me!" fell senseless on the ground.

Henry, overcome with a variety of emotions, was unable to assist him, and for a moment lost all consciousness himself. He however soon recovered to thankfulness and to joy. But no application could restore the guilty but penitent Everett; and they soon found that he was gone for ever.

"Thank God!" cried Henry, as he bent mournfully over him; "he died while performing a just and virtuous action; and may it be deemed an acceptable service!"

There is no power that can in a mo-

ment of strong excitement control a multitude; even the dread of personal danger is often found, at first, insufficient.

It was the case now. Mr. Irwin, having come in front of the scaffold, desired to read aloud the deposition of Everett.

He did so,—not omitting the unhappy man's attributing his resolution to sacrifice himself to save Henry's life, to his deep sense of the gratitude he owed him.

And when he had concluded, the air, after a short pause as it seemed of strong emotion, rung with shouts and loud tokens of applause and joy.

Every thing needful having been gone through, Mr. Irwin led Henry to his carriage; in which they were both no sooner seated, than the horses were off in a moment; and the carriage and its agitated inmates were dragged in triumph to the

principal inn in the town. Nor did that expression of their feelings content them, but they insisted on Henry's showing himself to them at the window of the inn.

While he was thus indulging their feelings at the expense of his own, and Mr. Irwin was throwing money amongst them, meaning to disperse them, but in reality making them more clamorous, a post-chaise drove up to the door, and a lady looked out of the window. At sight of Henry (pale, but evidently happy, bowing to the applauding multitude) she uttered a faint shriek, and withdrew her head. But Henry had recognised her, and swift as thought he was at the door of the carriage; and in a few moments he had borne the speechless but still consciously happy Anna into the house, followed by her trembling but as happy mother; for the appearance of things explained itself; and Henry, if at liberty and hailed by the

multitude, must have been not only innocent but proved so beyond a doubt.

Why need I longer prolong my narrative? Suffice, that Henry's happiness, like a snow-ball, increased as it went: for while hastening with Anna and her mother, as fast as four horses could carry them, on the road to London, they met Mr. Woodville and Mr. Courtnay on their way to Abingdon. And the now happy father pressed with pious thankfulness to his heart the son that was lost, and was now restored again.

Of this meeting, Mr. Irwin, who had followed the party in his carriage, was a delighted and sympathizing spectator; and when he parted from this group of happy beings, it was with mutual promises to meet again.

Nor was the consequence of Henry's cleared reputation, and restoration to his family, productive of the highest happiness in life to himself and Anna alone.

Mr. Harcourt, the father of his sister's lover, now gave a glad consent to the union of Elizabeth Woodville to his son:—and the day that united them, united also Henry Woodville to Anna Vincent.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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